

# **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

## **Hurlburt Field Skeet and Trap Club**

### **RCS 07-126**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500-1508) and Air Force regulations implementing NEPA procedures (32 CFR 989), the United States (U.S.) Air Force Special Operations Command, in partnership with the Air Armament Center, has conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA) of probable environmental consequences for the construction of a skeet and trap range on the Eglin Reservation near Fort Walton Beach, Florida.

#### **PURPOSE AND NEED**

Air Force Special Operations Command, in partnership with the Air Armament Center, proposes to construct an environmentally-benign skeet and trap range in close proximity to Hurlburt Field that is of sufficient size and quality to present a premier sport shooting opportunity for both DoD affiliated and non-DoD affiliated customers. The proposed skeet range is being developed to provide a safe, outdoor family-oriented sport to military and DoD members. There are no sport shooting ranges conforming to National Skeet Shooting Association (NSSA) and Amateur Trapshooting Association (ATA) standards within 60 minutes of Hurlburt Field or Eglin AFB. The facility will be open three days a week (Wednesday evenings (before sunset), Saturday and Sunday) throwing biodegradable targets that conform to NSSA and ATA rules and guidelines. The facility may be open other days for special functions for either Hurlburt or Eglin, or may offer range safety or hunter safety training classes for everyone.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

The Proposed Action will involve construction of electrical service to support range operations, concrete pavement as part of the skeet & trap stations (concrete lanes and pads), various sidewalks to provide “barrier free” access to the clubhouse, restrooms, and asphalt pavement to support vehicle parking requirements. Several small concrete block structures (trap houses) will also be constructed. It is anticipated that the clubhouse and restrooms will be a modular trailer in the near term. This will be a shotgun-only facility and lead shot will be authorized. Proposed facility includes:

- Five skeet/trap stations that include:
  - 8 ft x 8 ft concrete block trap house (three above the ground and two below ground)
  - 8 ft x 8 ft high/low skeet house
  - Concrete lanes and pads
- Parking for 30+ vehicles
- Clubhouse with electric service
- Restrooms with septic system
- Secured ammunition storage
- Non-potable water well

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Careful analysis of a Hurlburt Field base wide survey revealed that of the over 1,200 respondents, roughly 27%, said they would support a facility of this type. The assumption is Eglin would achieve close to the same results. Based on these results, a financially profitable skeet and trap range is possible. Based on this data, it is expected that approximately 14,800 pounds of lead will be deposited on the ground for reclamation each year. This assumes 2,105 units of 100 targets each will be sold annually.

**Preferred Alternative:** The preferred alternative is located south of Field 4. The site is currently used as a pine plantation; a portion of which is longleaf planted in 1998 and the smaller portion is slash pine planted in 1972. Access to the site is from Range Road 236 (Ranger Road) via Highway 189 (Lewis Turner Boulevard). The site is well drained with sandy, slightly acidic soils. No wetlands are located on the site. This site was selected as the preferred alternative because proximity to both Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field is excellent, and the site has been previously disturbed as a result of a past timber harvest. Utilities are located near (< 1,300 feet) the site making it possible to construct the facility within the funding limit allowed by the Air Force.

**Alternative 1:** The Timberlake West alternative is located southeast of the Okaloosa County spray fields. The site is currently used as a slash pine plantation. Access to the site is from Range Road 234 via Highway 189 (Lewis Turner Boulevard). While proximity to both Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field is excellent, this site was not selected as the preferred alternative because it is located closer to wetlands and residential housing than the preferred alternative. The potential risk of unanticipated wetlands impacts is only slightly higher than the risk to the preferred alternative site. Impulse noise generated from weapons discharge is not expected to have a significant effect on nearby residential housing. However, this site is significantly closer to residential housing and therefore higher levels of impulse noise would be received in the housing areas over that found in the preferred alternative site. In addition, no electrical power is nearby (> 2,600 feet). The excessive cost to bring electrical service to the site would push construction cost beyond the funding limits allowed by the Air Force.

**No Action Alternative:** Under the No Action alternative, activities associated with the Proposed Action or other action alternatives would not occur. Consequently, the environment within and adjacent to the alternative locations would remain as baseline and there would be no impacts to the resource areas beyond the scope of normal conditions and influences at these locations.

## SITES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

Site Name	Reasons for Elimination from Further Consideration		
	Operational	Technical	Environmental
Old Hurlburt Archery Range		No existing utilities – High support costs	Wetlands – Site is not large enough to accommodate desired end state facility size. Impacts endangered species habitat. Noise impact to nearby residential housing.
Commando Village West	Affect Air Force Housing Privatization effort	Range orientation not optimal	Wetlands – Site is not large enough to accommodate desired end state facility size. Noise impact to nearby residential housing.
Field Four	Affects approach to Runway 12 on Eglin	Not compatible with range salvage operations currently conducted at Field 4	
Okaloosa County Sprayfields Sites A & B	Leased by Okaloosa County – Not available until after 2011	No existing utilities – High support costs.	
Wright Land Fill		No existing utilities – High support costs.	Existing hazardous waste site operated by Okaloosa County – Air Force would have to assume legal and financial responsibility for the county's landfill

## SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The skeet and trap range facility will be constructed and operated in accordance with the recommendations and best management practices found in “*Best Management Practices for Environmental Stewardship of Florida Shooting Ranges*”, 2004 Edition, published by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Solid and Hazardous Waste and “*Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges*”, Revised June 2005, published by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The Air Force proposes to construct an environmentally-benign skeet and trap range that supports the shooting sports while providing a high degree of protection of the environment. Therefore, construction and operation of the range will include:

- Control and containment of lead shot
- Preventative measures to control lead migration in subsurface and surrounding surface water bodies
- Reoccurring removal and recycling of lead shot from the range
- Careful placement of shotfall zones to ensure spent lead shot does not fall into surface waters and wetlands
- Documentation and archiving of annual range activities.

Impacts to wildlife would not be significant under the proposed and alternative sites.

Potential impacts for the Florida black bear are associated with the potential for increased human-bear interaction and land clearing. While clearing would result in the loss of potential black bear habitat, the bear's avoidance of the area due to increased human presence and noise associated with the range may serve to benefit the bear through decreased bear-traffic related incidents. The project shall also include bear proof trash cans, where applicable.

Each of these areas is fire suppressed due to its location and is not optimal habitat for gopher tortoises (and subsequently the indigo snake and Florida pine snake). However, any gopher tortoises present may be impacted due to burrow collapse during construction activities. Prior to any land disturbing activities, a survey of the proposed and alternative areas to evaluate the presence of any gopher tortoise burrows shall be conducted. Any relocation of tortoises shall be coordinated through Eglin's Natural Resources Section.

The indigo snake, Florida pine snake, and Florida black bear may pass through the project area; however, the habitat in the area is degraded due to fire suppression, with a dense understory and sand pine encroachment. Potential impacts to the indigo snake and Florida pine snake would be the same at the proposed and alternative site. Habitat loss to the bear would be minimal, as the site represents less than 0.1 percent of the total area of undeveloped lands on Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), which provides black bear habitat throughout the Eglin Range.

The Proposed Action would potentially impact approximately 24 acres of migratory bird habitat and has the potential to cause adverse impacts to the resource. To avoid impacts to migratory birds, land clearing should occur on or after September 1 through March 15 to avoid the nesting season. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) does not contain any prohibition that applies to the destruction of a migratory bird nest alone (without birds or eggs), provided that no possession occurs during the destruction (USFWS, 2005). If clearing occurs before September 1, care would be taken to leave snags in place. If snags need to be removed for construction purposes, they may be removed after September 1. Coordination with Eglin's Natural Resources Section (96 CEG/CEVSN) is required prior to project initiation to ensure compliance with the MBTA.

Impacts from invasive nonnative plant species to biological resources will not be significant under any of the alternatives. No invasive nonnative plant species have been documented within any of the skeet range alternative locations. Disturbance to soil and vegetation from land clearing and construction could enhance conditions for the establishment and spread of invasive nonnative plant species. Because the majority of the project area would be covered by buildings, pavement, or landscaped areas, areas with the proper environment for the establishment of invasive nonnative plants would be minimal. Mitigations available to reduce the potential for invasive nonnative species infestations are:

- To reduce potential seed sources, treat areas with known invasive nonnative species problems.
- To avoid spreading invasive nonnative species, do not drive vehicles in areas with known invasive non-native species problems. If a vehicle is driven in such an infested area, clean the vehicle before it is driven to a noninfested area.
- Use only native plants for landscaping.

The preferred site has been surveyed for cultural resources. A draft report has been reviewed by the 96 CEG/CEVH. No eligible resources were encountered. The final report is due June 18 and will be submitted to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) who has 45 days to review. Concurrence with the report is expected; however the SHPO will make the final determination.

The alternative site was partially surveyed and has already been reviewed by the SHPO in a previous report. However, in the portion that has been surveyed, no resources were identified. If the alternative site were chosen, an archaeological survey would be required for the remaining acreage.

Eglin AFB is home to numerous noise sources such as aircraft noise, munitions use, and small arms noise. The addition of the skeet range will not cause a significant increase in the baseline noise levels at Eglin AFB. Vehicular noise will not occur at a frequency and intensity expected to cause impacts that would be perceived as significant. Construction noise will be limited to relatively undeveloped areas with no known sensitive receptors.

Construction of a skeet and trap range would necessitate closing the site to hunting. However, because the site is not ideal for deer hunting, the skeet range will likely provide better recreational opportunities than currently exist on the site (Communication with Mr. Justin Johnson, June 2008). For this reason, the beneficial impact of new recreational opportunities likely offsets any adverse affects resulting from the closure of the site to hunting.

**PUBLIC REVIEW:** A notice of the availability of the EA was published in the *Northwest Florida Daily News* on 16 June 2008. A 15-day comment period for public review of this EA ended on 30 June 2008. No comments were received for this action.

#### **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

Based on my review of the facts and the environmental analysis contained in the attached EA and as summarized above, I find the proposed decision of the Air Armament Center to allow the construction of a skeet and trap range on the Eglin Reservation, located near Fort Walton Beach, Florida would not have a significant impact on the human or natural environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required. This analysis fulfills the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, the President's Council on Environmental Quality and 32 CFR Part 989.



DENNIS D. YATES, Colonel, USAF  
Commander, 96th Civil Engineer Group



DATE

**Final  
Environmental Assessment**

**Hurlburt Field Skeet & Trap Club**

RCS# 07-126

July 2008

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **Introduction**

Air Force Special Operations Command, in partnership with the Air Armament Center, proposes to construct an environmentally-benign skeet and trap range in close proximity to Hurlburt Field that is of sufficient size and quality to present a premier sport shooting opportunity for both DoD affiliated and non-DoD affiliated customers. The proposed skeet range is being developed to provide a safe, outdoor family-oriented sport to military and DoD members. There are no sport shooting ranges conforming to National Skeet Shooting Association (NSSA) and Amateur Trapshooting Association (ATA) standards within 60 minutes of Hurlburt Field or Eglin AFB.

## **Proposed Actions and Alternatives**

The Proposed Action will involve site clearing, construction of electrical service to support range operations, concrete pavement as part of the skeet & trap stations (concrete lanes and pads), various sidewalks to provide “barrier free” access to the clubhouse, restrooms, an access drive and parking lot. Asphalt pavement will eventually be installed to support vehicle parking requirements (although gravel parking is anticipated initially due to cost constraints). Several small concrete block structures (trap houses) will be constructed. It is anticipated that the clubhouse and restrooms will be a modular trailer in the near term.

The Proposed Action includes five skeet/trap stations, an access drive and parking for 30+ vehicles. The range would also include, at a minimum, a clubhouse with electric service, restroom facilities with associated septic tank and drain field, a secured ammunition storage area and a non-potable water well. Each skeet/trap station will also have an 8 x 8 concrete block trap house (three above the ground and two below ground), an 8 x 8 high/low skeet house, concrete lanes and pads. This will be a shotgun-only facility and lead shot will be authorized.

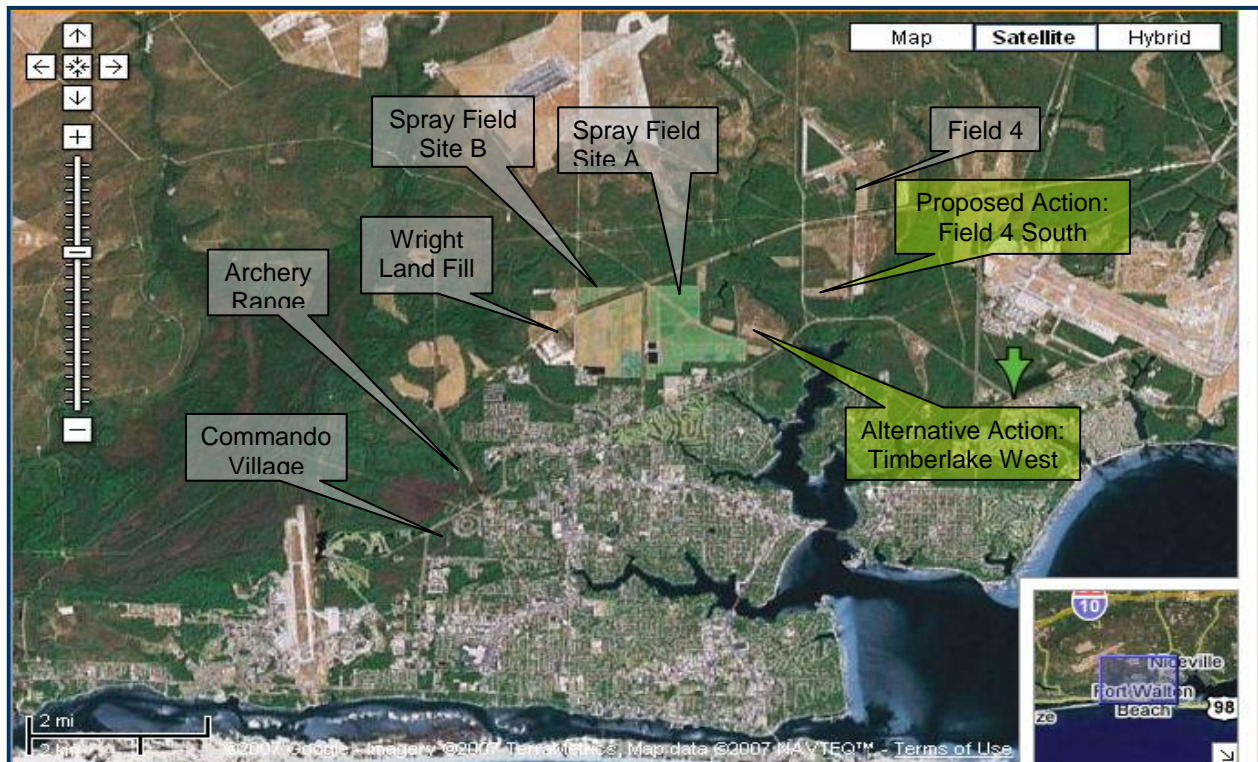
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The Timberlake West alternative is located southeast of the Okaloosa County spray fields. The site is currently used as a slash pine plantation. Access to the site is from Range Road 234 via Highway 189 (Lewis Turner Boulevard). While proximity to both Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field is excellent, this site was not selected as the preferred alternative because it is located closer to wetlands and residential housing than the preferred alternative. The potential risk of unanticipated wetlands impacts is only slightly higher than the risk to the preferred alternative site. Impulse noise generated from weapons discharge is not expected to have a significant effect on nearby residential housing. However, this site is significantly closer to residential housing and therefore higher levels of impulse noise would be received in the housing areas over that found in the preferred alternative site. In addition, no electrical power is nearby. The excessive cost to bring electrical service to the site would push construction cost beyond the funding limits

allowed by the Air Force.

Several other sites were considered but eliminated from further considerations due to various operational, technical, or environmental reasons. These sites are listed below:

Site Name	Reasons for Elimination from Further Consideration		
	Operational	Technical	Environmental
Old Hurlburt Archery Range		No existing utilities – High support costs	Wetlands – Site is not large enough to accommodate desired end state facility size. Impacts endangered species habitat. Noise impact to nearby residential housing.
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Wright Land Fill		No existing utilities – High support costs.	Existing hazardous waste site operated by Okaloosa County – Air Force would have to assume legal and financial responsibility for the county's landfill



*Regional Map Showing All Sites Considered*

## Environmental Consequences

Several potential impacts to the environment could occur if the proposed site or alternative site is selected. Both the preferred and alternative actions are located within black bear and gopher tortoise habitat and a moderate risk of affecting/encountering a black bear or gopher tortoise exists. There is also a risk of encountering the federally endangered indigo snake. Best management practices will include measures to ensure personnel are trained to avoid encounters with these valuable biological resources. The clearing of these sites also has the potential to impact migratory birds during their breeding season from April 15 through August 15. Impacts from invasive nonnative plant species to biological resources will not be significant under any of the alternatives. No invasive nonnative plant species have been documented within any of the skeet range alternative locations. The preferred site was surveyed in 2008 for cultural resources and no eligible resources were encountered. A draft report has been reviewed by Eglin's Cultural Resource Management Branch (96 CEG/CEVH). The final report is due 18 Jun and will be submitted to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) who has 45 days to review. Concurrence with the report is expected; however the SHPO will make the final determination. The alternative site was partially surveyed for cultural resources and has already been reviewed by the SHPO in a previous report. In the portion that was surveyed, no resources were identified. If the alternative site were chosen, an archaeological survey would be required for the remaining acreage. Eglin AFB is home to numerous noise sources such as aircraft noise, munitions use, and small arms noise. The addition of the skeet range would not cause a significant increase in the baseline noise levels. Vehicular noise would not occur at a frequency and intensity expected to cause impacts that would be perceived as significant. Construction noise would be limited to relatively undeveloped areas with no known sensitive receptors. The proposed range provides a positive socioeconomic impact by improving an underutilized hunting area with a premier skeet and trap-shooting complex.

Comparison matrix of environmental effects of all alternatives

Resource	Proposed Action	Alternative 1	No Action
Air Quality - Aboveground Storage Tanks	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Alligator Snapping Turtle	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Aquatic Preserves	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Bald Eagle	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Black Bear	B/I	B/I	N
Biological Resources - Bog Frogs	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Burrowing Owl	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Darter Streams	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Dusky Gopher Frog	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Ecological Condition Model Tier I Habitat	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Essential Fish Habitat	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Flatwood Salamanders	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Gopher Tortoise	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Gopher Tortoise Habitat	I	I	N
Biological Resources - Gulf Sturgeon	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Indigo Snake	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Indigo Snake Habitat	I	I	N
Biological Resources - Invasive Non-Native Species	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Migratory Bird Habitat	N	N	N
Biological Resources - Outstanding Florida Waters	N	N	N
Biological Resources - RCW Active Tree	N	N	N
Biological Resources - RCW Habitat	N	N	N
Biological Resources - RCW Inactive Tree	N	N	N
Biological Resources - SE American Kestrel	N	N	N

<b>Biological Resources - Special Natural Areas</b>	N	N	N
<b>Cultural Resources - Cemeteries</b>	N	N	N
<b>Cultural Resources – Cultural Restricted Areas</b>	I	I	N
<b>Cultural Resources - Historic Districts</b>	N	N	N
<b>Geology and Soils – Highly Erodable Sand/Sediments</b>	N	N	N
<b>Geology and Soils - Moderate erodibility sands/sediments</b>	N	N	N
<b>Geology and Soils - Slope 15 or Greater</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hazardous and Toxic Materials - AOC Sites</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hazardous and Toxic Materials - IRP Sites</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hazardous and Toxic Materials - Underground Storage Tanks</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hazardous and Toxic Materials – UXO Sites</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality - 303d Listed waters</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality - FEMA 100 year floodplain</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality - Ponds Seepage</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality - Slope Community</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality - Streams</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality - Wells</b>	N	N	N
<b>Hydrology and Water Quality - Wetlands</b>	N	N	N
<b>Noise - Impulse</b>	N	N	N
<b>Socioeconomics - Daycares</b>	N	N	N
<b>Socioeconomics - Hospitals</b>	N	N	N
<b>Socioeconomics - Housing Areas</b>	N	N	N
<b>Socioeconomics - Minority Populations</b>	N	N	N
<b>Socioeconomics - Outdoor Recreation</b>	N	N	N
<b>Socioeconomics - Restricted Areas</b>	N	N	N
<b>Socioeconomics - Schools</b>	N	N	N
<b>Utility Infrastructure - Potable Water Wells</b>	N	N	N

Note: B = Beneficial impact  
I = Adverse impact  
N = None/negligible impact  
U = Undetermined impact

## **1.0 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION**

### **1.1 PURPOSE FOR THE ACTION**

The purpose of this proposed action is to provide an environmentally-benign skeet and trap range in close proximity to Hurlburt Field that is of sufficient size and quality to present a premier sport shooting opportunity for both DoD affiliated and non-DoD affiliated customers.

### **1.2 NEED FOR PROPOSED ACTION**

The proposed skeet range is being developed to provide a safe, outdoor family oriented sport to military and DoD members. There are no sport shooting ranges conforming to National Skeet Shooting Association (NSSA) and Amateur Trapshooting Association (ATA) standards within 60 minutes of Hurlburt Field or Eglin AFB. Only biodegradable targets that conform to NSSA and ATA rules and guidelines will be used. The facility will be open three days a week (Wednesday evenings (before sunset), Saturday and Sunday). The facility may be open other days for special functions for either Hurlburt or Eglin, or may offer range safety or hunter safety training classes for everyone. Careful analysis of a Hurlburt Field base wide survey revealed that of the over 1,200 respondents, roughly 27%, said they would support a facility of this type (Appendix C). It is assumed Eglin would achieve close to the same results. Based on these results, a financially profitable skeet and trap range is possible. It is expected that approximately 14,800 pounds of lead will be deposited on the ground for reclamation each year. This assumes 2,105 units of 100 targets each will be sold annually.

### **1.3 PROPOSED ACTION**

The Proposed Action will involve site clearing, construction of electrical service to support range operations, concrete pavement as part of the skeet & trap stations (concrete lanes and pads), various sidewalks to provide “barrier free” access to the clubhouse, restrooms with associated septic tank and drain field, a non-potable water well, an access drive and a parking lot. Asphalt pavement will eventually be installed to support vehicle parking requirements, though gravel parking is anticipated initially due to cost constraints. Several small concrete block structures (trap houses) will be constructed. It is anticipated that the clubhouse and restrooms will be a modular trailer in the near term. See Section 2 for a more detailed discussion of the proposed action.

The facility will be constructed and operated in accordance with the recommendations and best management practices found in “*Best Management Practices for Environmental Stewardship of Florida Shooting Ranges*”, 2004 Edition, published by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Solid and Hazardous Waste and “*Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges*”, Revised June 2005, published by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

### **1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

The Hurlburt Skeet and Trap facility will be a shotgun sports shooting facility located on Eglin property designed to attract DoD participants from both Hurlburt Field and Eglin AFB as well as local non-DoD affiliated personnel. Careful analysis of the local data has shown an unfilled demand for this type of facility in the local area. This facility will be open three days per week with two combination ranges and the ability to expand to an additional three ranges (five total) as

participation numbers increase and bottom line financial posture improves. The proposed site location is just minutes from either the Hurlburt Field or Eglin community. Currently, a drive of at least one hour is needed in order to attend a facility with the shooting options available at this premier location.

Organizations such as the Boy Scouts could utilize the skeet, trap range for Merit Badges and safety training classes. The reputation for excellent programming that is associated with the United States Air Force Services, assures this facility will live up to the community expectations. Yearly "Associate Passes" will be available for DoD employees which will enable them to receive discounts on rounds shot as well as merchandise purchased from the facility. This facility will be accessible by anyone wishing to attend, so a two tiered pricing system will ensure that anyone not connected with DOD will pay a slightly higher fee structure for use of the ranges.

## **1.5 PRIOR SIMILAR ACTIVITIES**

In April 1994, Environmental Science & Engineering, Inc. prepared an environmental assessment for Eglin AFB titled: *Environmental Assessment for Construction of a Skeet Range Facility at Vacated Sprayfield Number 9 (ECN 93-532)* (USAF, 1994). Figure 1.1 shows the proposed location. Although the EA was completed and approved, implementation of the Proposed Action never occurred. The Proposed Action consisted of constructing a 2,000 square foot skeet and trap facility on a concrete pad. The facility was proposed to have a covered and lighted patio and trap field equipment. The facility included a customer service area, restrooms, manager's office, controlled access storage and a storage area for targets. Future construction was anticipated to include archery and pistol ranges as well as a playground. This site was eliminated from consideration in the current assessment due to conflicting land use issues with the mission and proposed transportation corridors, as well as distance to existing utilities.

Jacksonville Gun Club (12125 New Berlin Road, Jacksonville, FL 32226) operates a skeet range very similar to the proposed skeet range in an environment with soil types similar to those found on the Eglin AFB complex. The Jacksonville Gun Club reports that they reclaim the lead shot, test and maintain soil pH with lime as needed, and use phosphates to bind the lead until reclamation. The implementation of these best management practices, as outlined in the FDEP's *Management Practices for Environmental Stewardship of Florida Shooting Ranges* manuals (FDEP, 2004), have proven successful for the Jacksonville Gun Club (personal communication with Mr. Larry Freeman, Facility Director). Other federal ranges with similar success stories include Nellis AFB, NV and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glenco, GA. These successes have been attributed to proper project siting and adherence to the EPA's *Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges* (USEPA, 2005). The effectiveness of the planned best management practices outlined in the FDEP BMP Manual are forecasted with the case studies of model "clean" ranges found in Appendix A of the FDEP *Management Practices for Environmental Stewardship of Florida Shooting Ranges* manual (FDEP, 2004) and the successfully operationalized best management practices at the Jacksonville Gun Club, Nellis AFB Skeet Range, and FLETC.



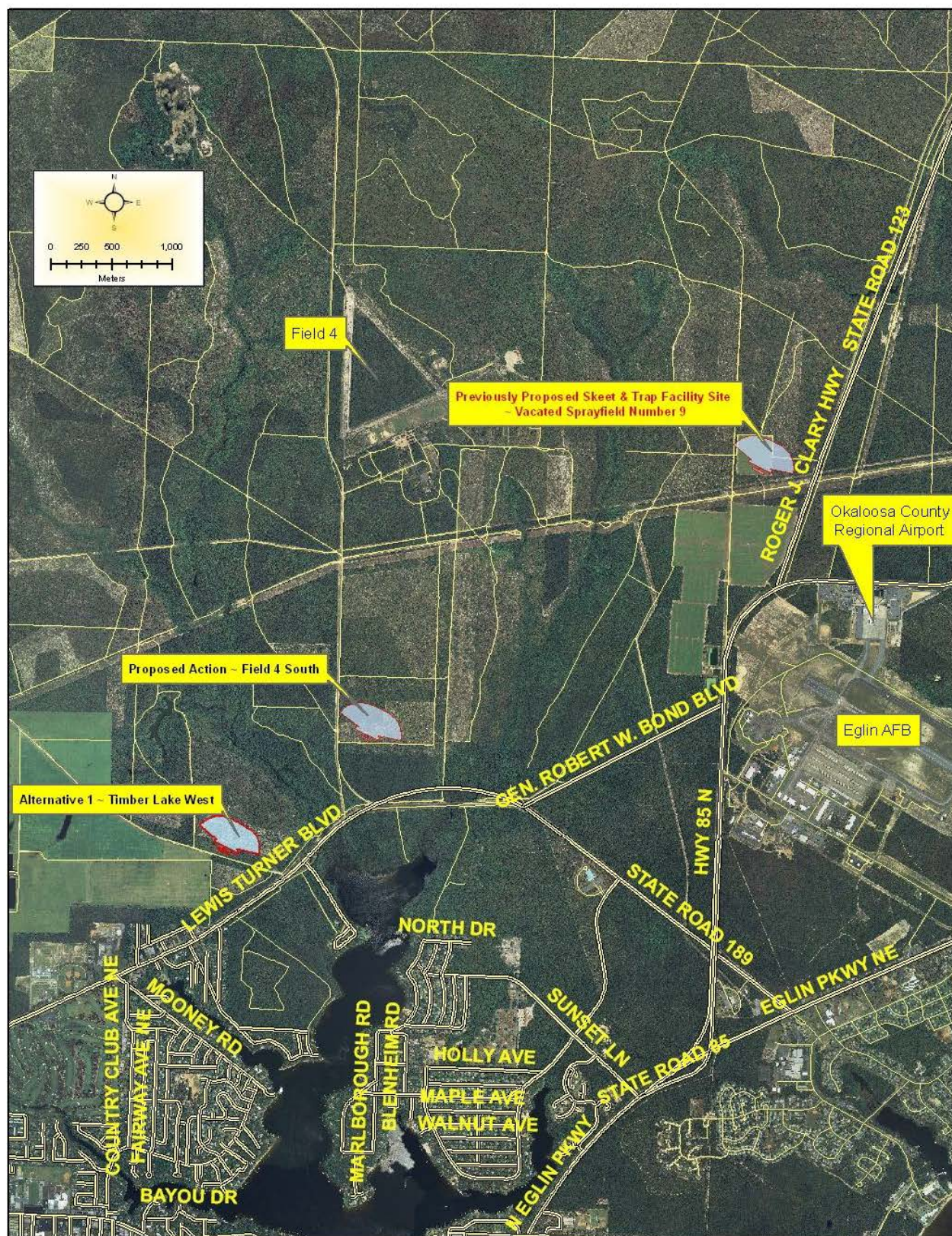


Figure 1.1: Previously Approved Site



Eglin AFB has prior similar activities related to lead contamination of soils similar to that of the proposed action and alternative that offer relevant historical perspective. However, lead generating activities, project siting, operation and maintenance of these similar activities varied widely producing mixed environmental results. The best examples of prior similar activities include Eglin Skeet Range FT-92 and Eglin POI-351, Field 4 Small Arms Range.

Eglin Skeet Range Site FT-92 is a former skeet range that was in operation for approximately 30 years and was closed in 1994. FT-92 was identified in 1994 as a potential area of concern during a preliminary assessment. A site investigation was conducted in 1995 and 1996 to determine the presence or absence of environmental contamination. The *1998 RCRA Facility Investigation and Interim Corrective Measures Report, Eglin Skeet Range and Eglin Skeet Range Fire Training Area (IRP Site No. FT-92)* states in Sec 5.1, Page 27: "Lead and aluminum were detected in sediment quality samples at concentrations that exceeded their respective Tier I Screening Levels. However, these concentrations are not higher than the ambient sediment quality in Choctawhatchee Bay (USAF, 1998). The concentrations of these metals were within one order of magnitude to the concentration detected in the sediment quality samples collected during the site investigation." The report goes on to state there were no exceedances of lead in soil samples or groundwater samples. In short, this site did not indicate a lead problem and was only required to go into cleanup due to other contaminants (Petroleum Aromatic Hydrocarbons). FT-92 is similar to the proposed action in that skeet shooting activities generated the discharged lead. FT-92 is dissimilar to the proposed action in that there was a shallow groundwater condition; skeet shooting was over surface waters and land; and there was no lead reclamation and no lead binding at the FT-92 site.

Eglin POI-351, Field 4 Small Arms Range is another similar site investigated as part of this EA. Historically, this small arms firing range was active in the eastern part of Auxiliary Field No. 4 at Eglin AFB. The range operated in the 1960s through the 1970s. The Field 4 Small Arms Range is an example of a typical small arms range in which small arms rounds were fired into targets located in a firing end butt setup. The range was in operation for approximately 20 years. Section 2.3, Page 5 of the *June 2004 Lead Shot and Recovery and Segregation Report Point of Interest No. 351 Auxiliary Field No. 4 CS Testing Site* states: "lead concentrations above the SI screening levels were detected in soil samples from 2 to 4 feet below surface level (BSL) (one sample) or 6 to 8 feet BSL (three samples) within an approximate 30-foot radius area on the west side of the firing range backstop.... Lead was not detected at concentrations above the screening levels in the subsurface soil samples collected below (from 10 to 12 feet BSL) the four samples described above (USAF, 2004)." Lead migrated at approximately 0.4 ft per year at this location at the highest migration sample point. POI-351 is similar to the proposed action in the aspect of sandy soils and depth to groundwater (approximately 45 ft BSL). Lead was noted at this site but it was found only at a depth of 6-8 feet after 20 years of operation and only after approximately 40-50 years of rainwater precipitating through the site. POI-351 is dissimilar in the lead generating activity: high velocity small arms fire at training ranges concentrate lead in a small target area while a skeet range disperses lead shot over a larger area. Additionally there was no lead reclamation and no lead binding management practices at POI-351, unlike this proposed action.

Eglin ST-253/259/260 Water Tower Sites are three additional sites investigated as part of this EA. All three water towers were constructed during the same timeframe on Eglin AFB between 1940 and 1960. The water tower tanks are currently used to store water for the Eglin water supply system. Although these sites are not similar to the proposed action in the method that the lead was generated and discharged, they are additional examples where lead was deposited onto the soil surface causing a potential lead contamination problem. Figures 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 in the *December 2006 Interim Corrective Measures*

*Report IRP Site Nos. NT, ST-253, ST-259, and ST-260 WATER Tower NOS. 5100, 12511, and 1100* (USAF, 2006) demonstrate that lead from the water towers exceeded soil cleanup levels down to 6 inches below surface level. However, below 12 inches, all samples met cleanup criteria. Also, groundwater was not required to be sampled. A No-Further-Action decision was issued for the water tower sites on December 19, 2006. The important point of this comparison is that lead in paint chips deposited onto the soil from the water towers produce similar results expected from lead shot deposited onto the soil surface at the proposed skeet range.

## **1.6 SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

This EA addresses potential environmental issues associated with the Proposed Action, one Alternative Action, and the no action alternative. Detailed description of the Proposed Action, Alternative Action and the no action alternative is presented in Section 2. A description of the existing environment at each proposed project area is presented in Section 3. These descriptions provide a framework for assessing potential environmental consequences of the Proposed Action, Alternative Action, and the no action alternative (Section 4). Sections 5 and 6 address cumulative impacts and resources evaluated but excluded from further analysis. Sections 7, 8 and 9 provide the List of Preparers, Agencies and Non-agency Persons Consulted and References, respectively.

Issues within the context of this document are the general categories used to distinguish the potential environmental impacts of actions described in the alternatives on identified resource areas. The initial environmental review of this proposal by the Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP) interdisciplinary team at Eglin AFB considered the following issues:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Environmental Justice
- Hazardous Materials/Waste
- Land Use
- Noise
- Physical Resources
- Safety/Restricted Access
- Socioeconomics
- Soils
- Water Quality

The issues remaining after the initial EIAP interdisciplinary team review were Biological Resources (black bear, gopher tortoise and indigo snake habitats, invasive plant species and migratory bird habitat), Cultural Resources, Noise and Socioeconomics (outdoor recreation). All other issues were subsequently eliminated from detailed impact analysis because they were not identified by the interdisciplinary team as having the potential to be impacted by the proposed action.

## **1.7 REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**

This EA has been prepared to satisfy NEPA requirements (42 USC 4321 et seq.) and implementing regulations. This analysis of environmental resources considered all applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

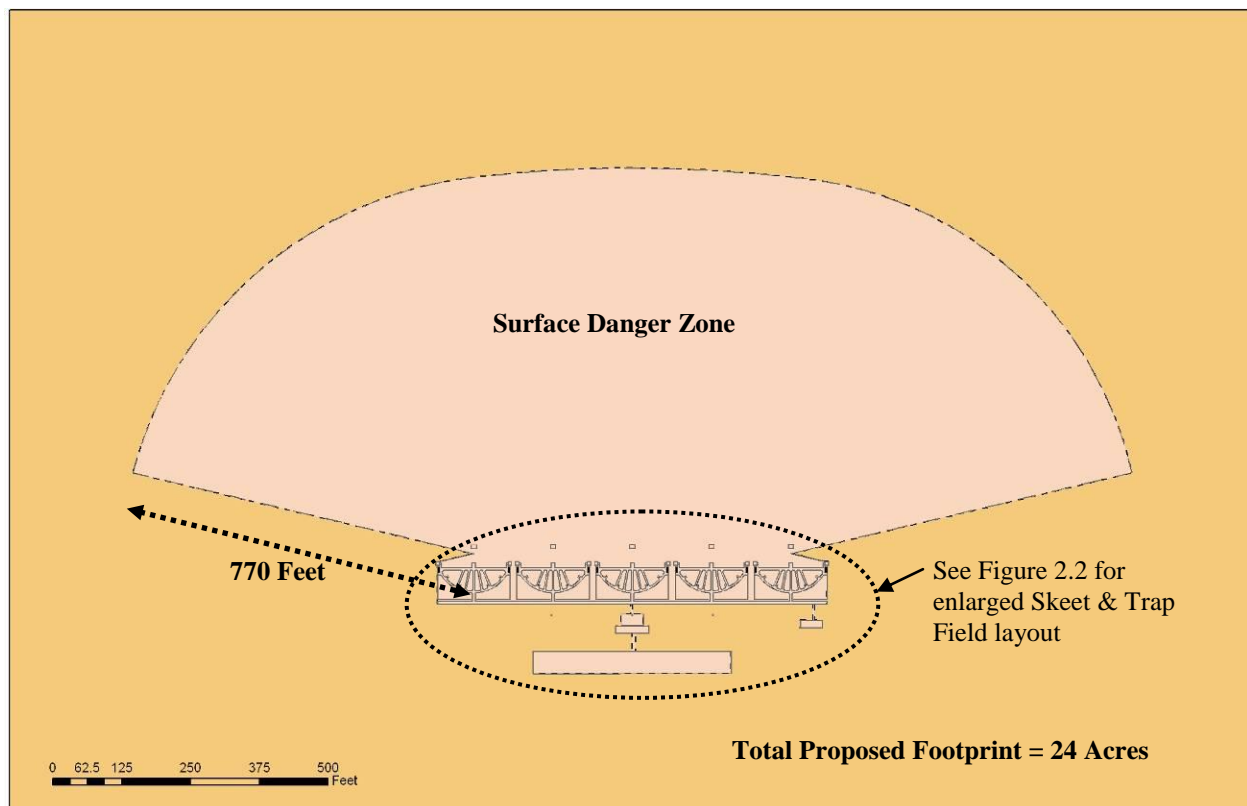
Actions taking place within the jurisdictional concerns of the FDEP require a consistency determination with respect to Florida's Coastal Zone Management Plan and the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) and implementing regulation 15 CFR 930.35. A Negative CZMA Determination was prepared for the proposed action and FDEP concurred that the proposed action meets the requirements of 15 CFR 930.35 on 9 June 2008.

All construction activities that have the potential to impact stormwater quality or disturb more than 1 acre of land must be permitted under ERP and NPDES regulations as administered by the FDEP. Stormwater Discharge Permits would require coordination between the proponent and the FDEP. Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) would obtain all appropriate permits prior to the commencement of any ground-disturbing activities. A permit request will be submitted by the Air Force prior to project initiation according to FAC Rule 62-346.

## 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

The Proposed Action will involve site clearing, construction of electrical service to support range operations, concrete pavement as part of the skeet & trap stations (concrete lanes and pads), various sidewalks to provide “barrier free” access to the clubhouse, restrooms with associated septic tank and drain field, non-potable water well, access driveway and parking lot. Asphalt pavement will eventually be installed to support vehicle parking requirements (although gravel parking is anticipated initially due to cost constraints). Several small concrete block structures (trap houses) will be constructed. It is anticipated that the clubhouse and restrooms will be a modular trailer in the near term. Typical construction activities will occur involving site clearing, including tree and stump removal and the building of structures utilizing standard construction equipment (bulldozers, front-end loaders, etc.). This type of activity also typically involves earth movement and grading for foundation set-up, so coordination with Eglin’s Cultural Resource Office (96 CEG/CEVH) will be required if cultural resources are inadvertently discovered.

The Proposed Action (Figure 2.1) includes five skeet/trap stations, an access drive and parking for 30+ vehicles. The range will also include a 13 ft x 60 ft modular building to be utilized as a clubhouse with electrical service, men’s and women’s restroom facilities and associated septic tank and drain field. A secured ammunition storage area (including a lockable steel fireproof container), for a limited amount of ammunition storage, and non-potable water well is also proposed.



*Figure 2.1: Notional Layout of the Proposed Skeet and Trap Range*

Field Layout (Figure 2.2): Each of the five shooting fields will have three machines, one trap and two skeet. Each field will also have an 8 ft x 8 ft concrete block trap house (three above the ground and two below ground), an 8 x 8 high/low skeet house, concrete lanes and pads. This will be a shotgun-only facility and lead shot will be authorized.

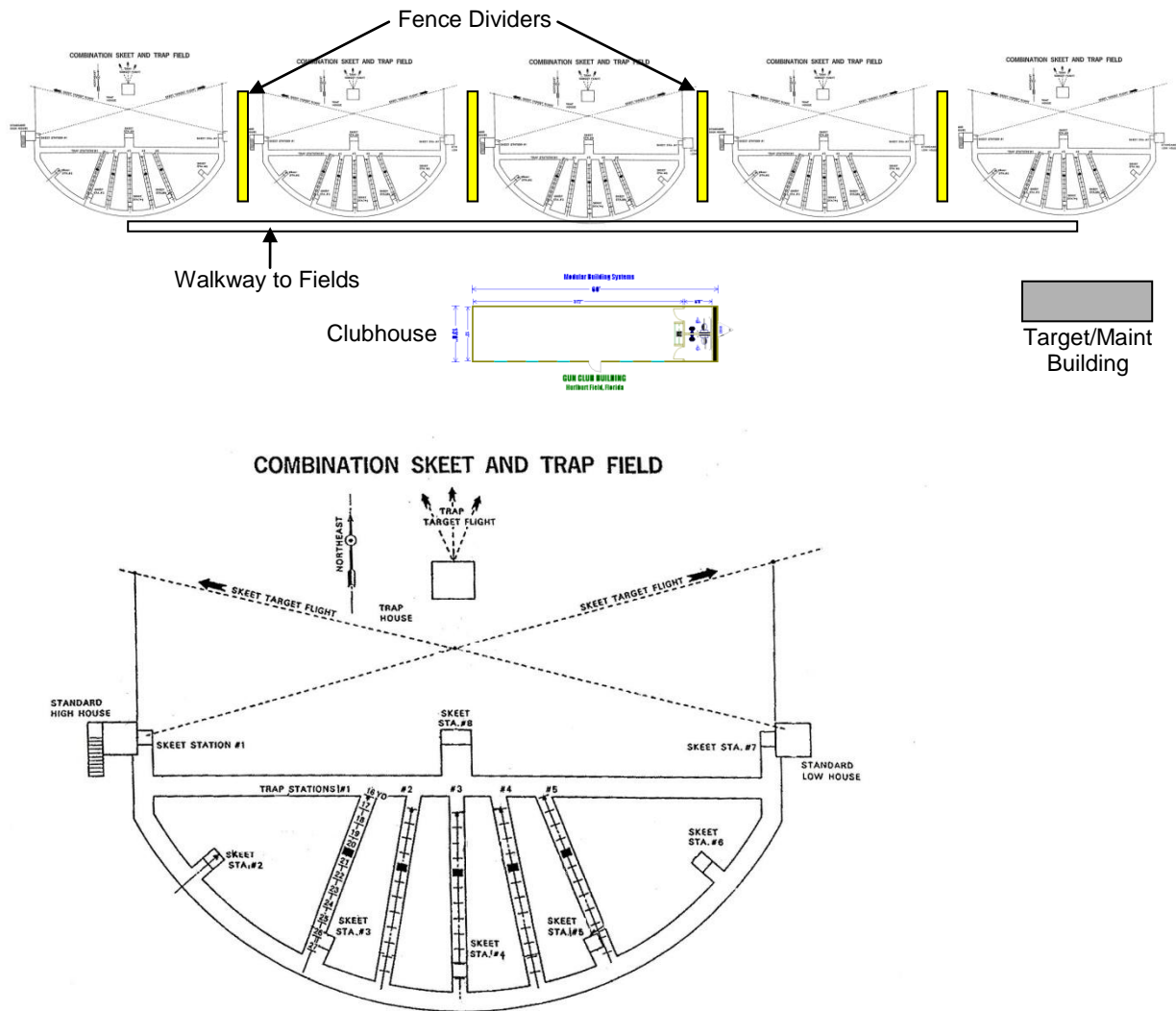


Figure 2.2: Skeet and Trap Field Layout

In addition to the No Action alternative, two sites are being considered for locating the proposed skeet and trap range facility (Figure 2.3). A site located south of Field 4, east of Ranger Road, is the preferred alternative site. This site offers excellent proximity to both Eglin and Hurlburt Field. A site northeast of Timber Lake Road will be considered as an alternative site. This site has also been recently cleared of trees and offers excellent proximity to both Eglin and Hurlburt Field. However, the cost of providing utilities to this site will add considerable cost to the project.



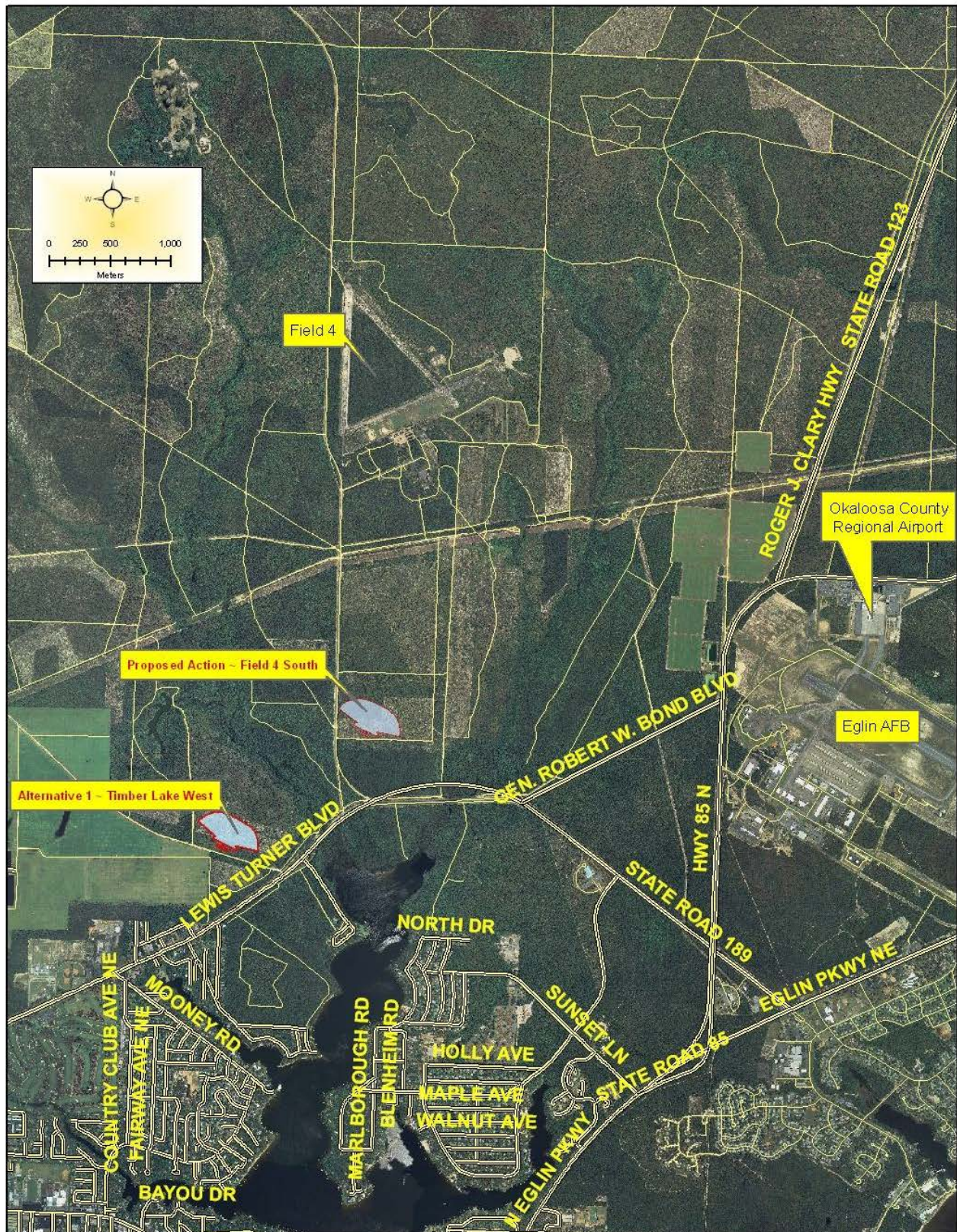


Figure 2.3: Vicinity Map Showing the Two Proposed Site Alternatives



Planning for the proposed action began by researching site locations that met mission, safety and environmental requirements. From an environmental standpoint, siting had to address all potential environmental issues to include proximity to ground and surface waters. After the review of potential site locations, specific attention was given to the threat of lead migration. Specifically, AFSOC investigated locations that were: over 0.25 mile from surface waters or wetlands, located over 10 ft to groundwater, and relatively flat with little topography to inhibit stormwater runoff.

The next phase was to develop an environmental stewardship plan/program that ensures the proposed range will not create any environmental issues. This plan addresses construction and operation of the range including:

- Control and containment of lead shot
- Preventative measures and correct placement of shotfall zones to prevent lead migration into subsurface and surrounding surface water bodies
- Reoccurring removal and recycling of lead shot from the range
- Documentation and archiving of annual range activities

### **Control and Containment of Lead Shot**

Unlike rifle and pistol ranges, the area impacted by lead shot fired at trap and skeet ranges is spread out over a large area. However, the lead shot primarily remains at the surface of the soil. Knowing the location of the spent lead allows the appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) to be used. Baseline sampling/testing of the soil will be conducted prior to commencement of construction activities to establish background levels of lead, iron and manganese. Another important BMP for managing lead in these areas is reducing the shotfall zones. AFSOC proposes concentrating the lead shot in a smaller area, facilitating lead management by providing a smaller and more dense area of lead to both manage in place and reclaim, thereby making the management and reclamation process simpler and more effective. To reduce the shotfall area at the range, the range will be designed so that the shot fall areas overlap as much as possible.

### **Preventative Measures**

Immobilization of lead in the proposed range soils will be accomplished by using lime to maintain neutral soil pH. Adjustment of the soil pH to a more neutral level between 6.5 and 8.5 on the pH scale will be achieved to help inhibit lead corrosion. Metallic lead is more likely to corrode into water-soluble compounds that can migrate into areas outside of the range when the pH is outside of the desired 6.5-8.5 range. Values of pH below 7 are considered acidic and most areas in Florida have a naturally occurring acidic pH in the 4 to 6 range. Liming the soil is common practice with agricultural operations to raise soil pH and the same methods will be used on this shooting range. The 1st Special Operations Services Squadron will test the pH of the soil annually to establish the appropriate amount of lime application necessary to maintain an acceptable pH level. In addition, phosphates or other binding agents may be utilized to bind lead to prevent future potential migration before the lead shot can be reclaimed.



## **Lead Removal and Recycling**

A lead reclamation program will be implemented to avoid impacts to the soil and groundwater resources. Northwest Florida is a region with high precipitation with acidic soil conditions. Therefore it is likely this proposed range will require more frequent lead recovery since the potential for lead migration is greater. Lime will be added to the soil during all lead removal activities that involve soil screening. All lead and other material removed for reclamation or disposal will be stored in closed containers and sent to an appropriately permitted facility within the allowed time. Should lead contamination of the groundwater or soil occur, AFSOC would take all necessary steps to ensure protection of the unaffected environment and natural resources, as well as remediate any lead contamination caused by this proposed action.

Lead shot used in skeet and trap shooting sports conducted on controlled ranges has the potential to be a profitable recycled commodity. Many experienced skeet and trap enthusiasts prefer to load their own shot and purchase loose lead shot from ranges for home loading. Therefore, skeet and trap ranges typically allow lead reclamation contractors to clean their ranges at reduced cost in exchange for collecting the lead shot for resale. These contractors will typically reclaim the lead shot using any one of several accepted techniques. One of the following techniques will be used:

*Hand Raking and Sifting:* At trap and skeet ranges, conducting sifting and raking activities in the shot fall zone (approximately 125-150 yards from the shooting stations) will yield the most lead. The process consists of raking the topsoil with a yard rake in the shot fall areas into piles, as if you were raking leaves. This removes any large debris (e.g., rocks, twigs, leaves, etc.). The soil is then sifted using screens. Once the soil has been raked and collected, it is passed through a standard 3/16-inch screen to remove the large particles. This process will allow the lead shot sized particles to pass through the screen. The sifted material (those not captured by the 3/16 inch screen) should then be passed through a 5/100-inch screen to capture the lead and lead fragments.

*Mechanical Screening Machine:* Reclamation equipment can be rented from local equipment rental services. One type of machine that can be rented for lead shot reclamation is known as a screening machine (also referred to as a mobile shaker, gravel sizer, or potato sizer). This device uses a series of stacked vibrating screens (usually two screens) of different mesh sizes and allows the user to sift the lead shot-containing soil (gathered by hand raking, sweeping, or vacuuming).

*Vacuum Systems/Services:* Vacuum systems/services can be used to collect the lead shot-containing soil from the range. Here, vacuuming takes the place of hand raking or sweeping. Vacuum machines are used to collect the lead shot containing soil. Once collected, lead shot containing soil is sifted through a screening system (either a rental screening machine, or a series of home-made framed screen sets). The soil will be returned to the site.

## **Record Keeping**

AFSOC will document what type of BMPs were implemented to control lead migration, recycling of lead, the date of service, and who did the services. The records will be kept for the

life of the range. These records will help in determining how often pH stabilization and lead reclamation activities occurred. Records will include:

1. Log of routine Range activities:
  - a. Inspections
  - b. pH testing (dates and results)
  - c. Lime and phosphate addition
2. Photographs (Before construction, during construction, during active range use and the life of the range, lead removal projects, documenting any special projects or changes in range design and operation)
3. Log of BMP implementation:
  - a. Initial environmental assessment/map of lead deposits
  - b. Engineering and management options
  - c. Rationale for range design, modifications and operations
  - d. Dates and descriptions of reclamation activities
  - e. Problems addressed
  - f. Costs and expenditures
  - g. Range conditions (e.g., environmental)
  - h. Follow-up actions
4. Changed operational practices: rationale, frequency and results
5. Changes in operational costs related to changes in range operations
6. Log of environment related complaints

## **2.1 PROPOSED ACTION**

The preferred alternative is located south of Field 4 (Figure 2.4). The site is currently used as a pine plantation; a portion of which is longleaf planted in 1998 and the smaller portion is slash pine planted in 1972. Access to the site is from Range Road 236 (Ranger Road) via Highway 189 (Lewis Turner Boulevard).

The site is ideally situated to allow the proper orientation of the range, eliminating potential problems with sun orientation conflicts during operation of the range. The site characteristics are summarized below:

**Size:** The site is large enough to adequately accommodate the proposed desired end-state range, including adequate safety buffers. The site is currently used as a pine plantation; a portion of which is longleaf planted in 1998 and the smaller portion is slash pine planted in 1972.

Adequate timber buffers exist to help mitigate noise associated with skeet and trap range operations. The site is located approximately 1 mile from any residential housing.

**Accessibility:** The site is located on the southern end of, and on the east side of, Range Road 236 (Ranger Road). Public access to Range Road 236 is from Highway 189 (Lewis Turner Boulevard).

**Soil Characteristics:** According to the Okaloosa County Soil Survey, soils on the site primarily consist of Lakeland Sand, excessively drained with a relative pH between 4.5 and 6.0.

**Annual Precipitation/Seasonal Flooding:** According to the Okaloosa County Soil Survey, the annual rainfall is 62 inches. There is no evidence this site has ever flooded. The soil is sandy and well drained.

**Topography/Run-off Directions:** The site elevation ranges from 70 feet to the NW down to 50

feet to the SE. Stormwater runoff is not expected due to the sandy, excessively drained soils. However, should any runoff occur after site prep work, it appears it would flow to the SE, East and SW. An Environmental Resource Permit (ERP), National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit, and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will be necessary to ensure the site is properly managed to protect against stormwater runoff.

**Groundwater/Surface Water:** The groundwater is greater than 72" below land surface as documented in the Okaloosa County Soil Survey (NRCS, 1995), however actual depth is estimated at over 10 ft. No surface water features are found on this site.

**Vegetation/Risk to Wildlife:** A site-specific field survey will be conducted prior to any construction activity. Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be implemented to help minimize any adverse impacts to vegetation and wildlife. No risk to vegetation/wildlife is expected. Risks to non-protected vegetation/wildlife are only to be from the clearing and grubbing on site.

**Wetlands:** There are no wetlands present on the site. The nearest wetlands to the Proposed Action are over 0.25 miles as described in the National Wetlands Inventory Maps (USFWS, 2008). The wetlands are associated with the unnamed tributary that feeds into Timber Lake and Lightwood Knot Creek.

**Proximity to Neighbors:** The nearest residential housing is located approximately one mile from the proposed site.

## **2.2 ALTERNATIVE 1: TIMBERLAKE WEST**

This alternative site is located southeast of the Okaloosa County spray fields (Figure 2.5). Public access is from Range Road 234 off Hwy 189 (Lewis Turner Blvd). This site is composed of a longleaf pine plantation that was planted in 1999.

The site is ideally situated to allow the proper orientation of the range, eliminating potential problems with sun orientation conflicts during operation of the range. The site characteristics are summarized below:

**Size:** The site is large enough to adequately accommodate the proposed desired end-state range, including adequate safety buffers. This site is composed of a longleaf pine plantation that was planted in 1999. While adequate timber buffers exist to help mitigate noise associated with skeet and trap range operations, it should be noted this site is significantly closer to residential housing than the proposed site (approximately 0.5 mile).

**Accessibility:** The site is located southeast of the Okaloosa County spray fields. Public access to the site is from Range Road 234 off Hwy 189 (Lewis Turner Blvd).

**Soil Characteristics:** Lakeland sand is the only noted soil type within this alternative's boundary. Lakeland series soils consists of very deep, excessively drained, rapidly permeable soils that formed in thick, sandy sediments and pH ranges from 4.5-6.0. These soils are on nearly level to steep uplands.

**Annual Precipitation/Seasonal Flooding:** Annual rainfall total expected is 62 inches. The site does not flood or pond during heavy rains.

**Topography/Run-off Directions:** This site ranges in elevation from 70-75 feet. Stormwater runoff appears to be minimal and is to the northwest/north. An ERP Permit, NPDES Permit, and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will be necessary to ensure the site is properly managed to protect against stormwater runoff.



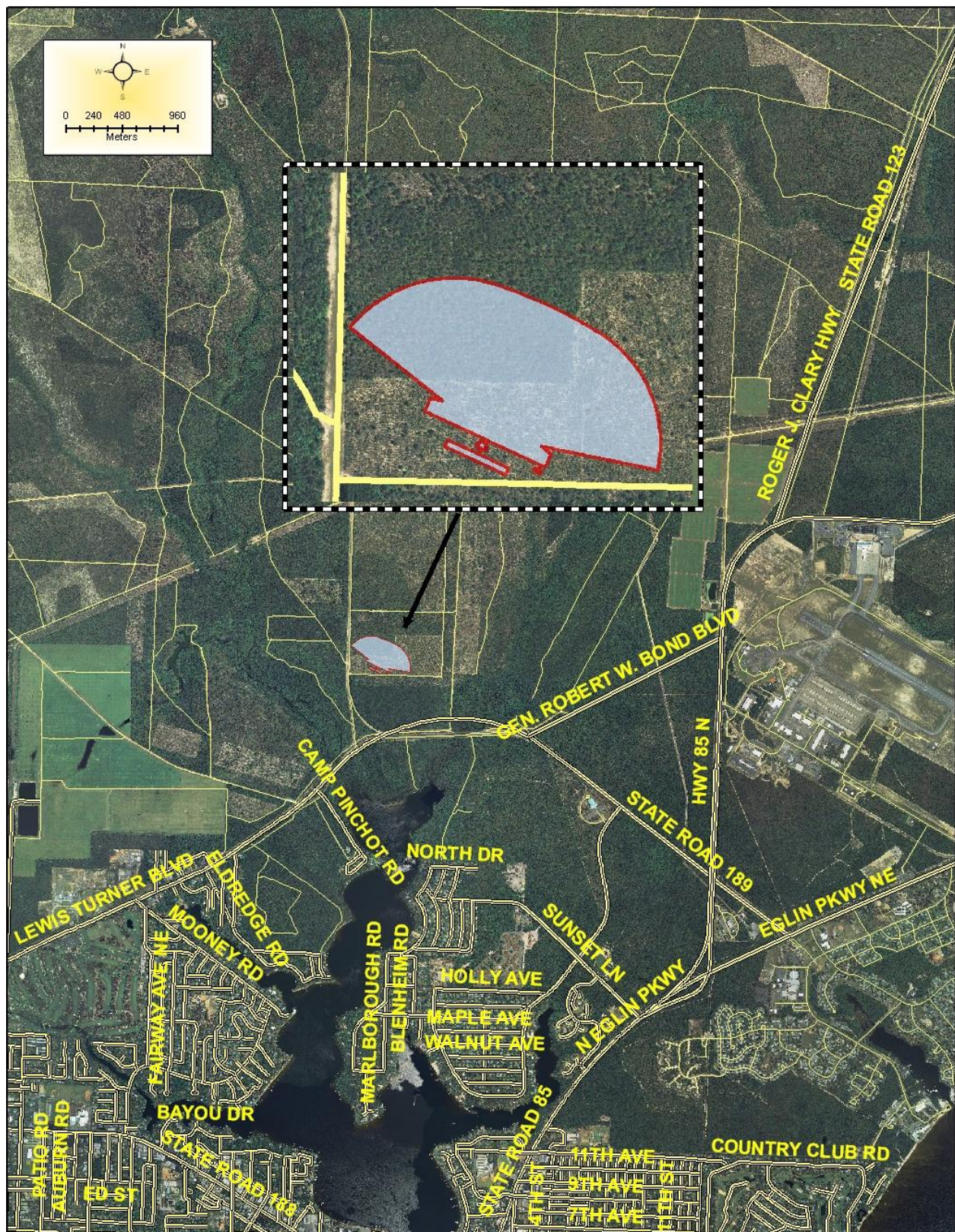


Figure 2.4: Proposed Action Site



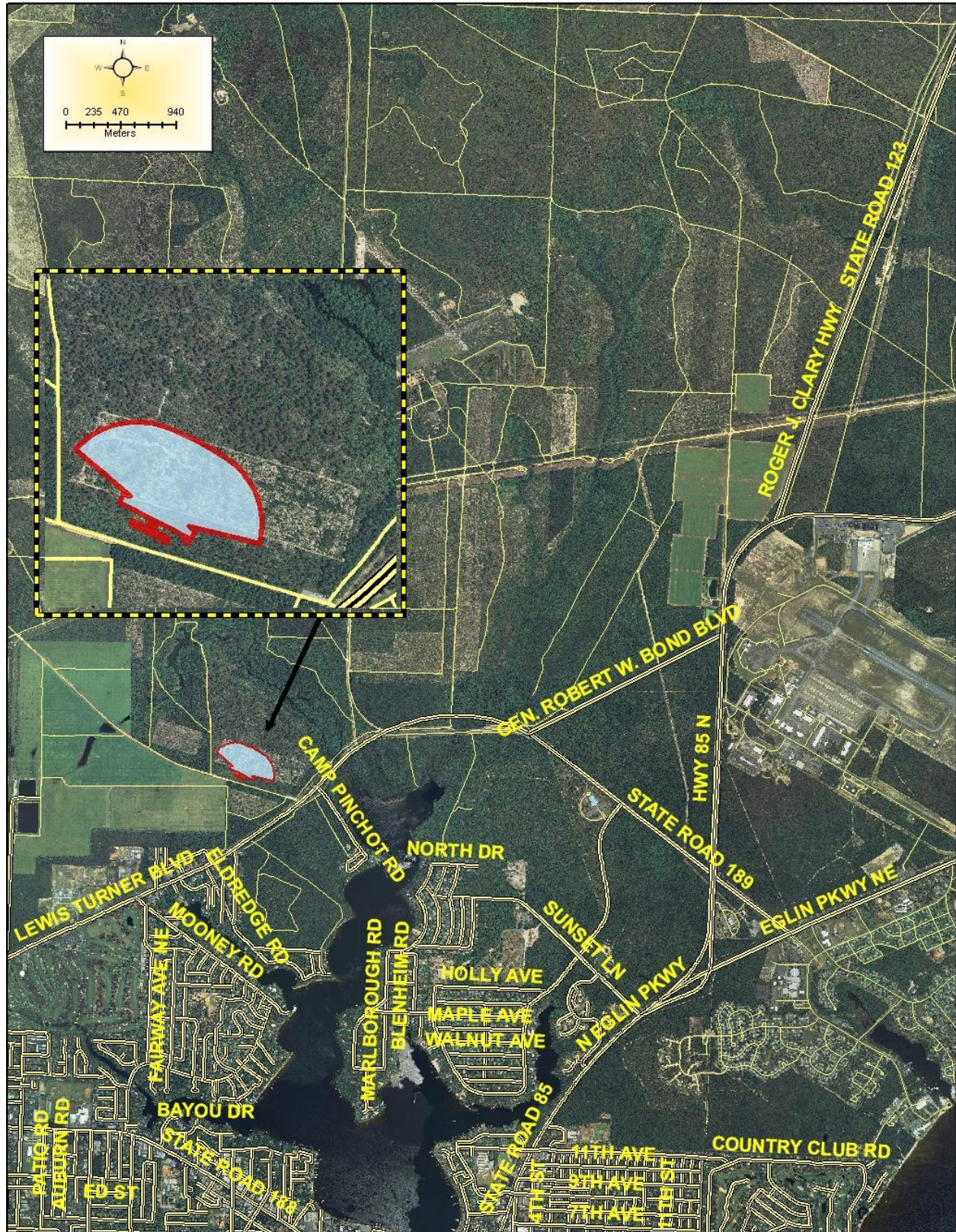


Figure 2.5: Alternative 1: Timberlake West



**Groundwater/Surface Water:** Depth below surface groundwater is over 80 inches. The closest surface water is the unnamed tributary that feeds into Timber Lake and Lightwood Knot Creek over 0.25 mile northwest of this alternate site location.

**Vegetation/Risk to Wildlife:** A site-specific field survey will be conducted prior to any construction activity. Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be implemented to help minimize any adverse impacts to vegetation and wildlife.

**Wetlands:** There are no wetlands present on the site. The nearest wetlands to Alternative 1 are over 0.25 miles as described in the National Wetlands Inventory Maps (USFWS, 2008).

**Proximity to Neighbors:** The nearest residential housing is located approximately 0.5 mile from the proposed site.

### **2.3 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action alternative, activities associated with the Proposed Action or other action alternatives would not occur. Consequently, the environment within and adjacent to the alternative locations would remain as baseline and there would be no impacts to the resource areas beyond the scope of normal conditions and influences at these locations.

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### 3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENTS

This chapter describes the affected environment. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidelines, and 32 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 989, et seq., the description of the affected environment focuses on those resources and conditions potentially subject to impacts. The Automated Site Evaluation Tool (ASET), a geospatial tool designed to evaluate environmental impacts of proposed undertakings, was used to determine which environmental resources might be impacted by the Proposed Action. ASET eliminated several resources and excluded them from further analysis due to the high probability of no significant impacts. These resources are listed at the end of Section 4.

#### 3.1 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Biological resources include the native and introduced terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals around Eglin AFB. The land areas at Eglin are home to unusually diverse biological resources including several sensitive species, habitats, and wetlands. Eglin uses a classification system based on ecological associations that were developed based on floral, faunal, and geophysical characteristics. These ecological associations are described in the *Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP)*, Department of the Air Force, Eglin AFB, Florida and the U.S. Air Force 2002b, *Eglin Military Complex Environmental Baseline Study Resource Appendices, Volume I – Eglin Land Test and Training Range Appendix G, Safety*. The proposed work sites are located in the Sandhills Ecological Association.

##### **Black Bear**

The Florida black bear (*Ursus americanus floridanus*) is listed by the state of Florida as a threatened species except in Baker and Columbia counties, and in the Apalachicola National Forest. Currently, Florida, Georgia and Alabama have populations of this species. A small population of 60 to 100 individuals is found on Eglin AFB. Since the 1990s, the Eglin population has been increasing. In Florida, black bear breed in June-July and young are born in January-February.

Black bears inhabit swampy areas, flatwoods, stream riparian areas and the pine-oak forests of the Sandhills where they feed on fruits, acorns, beetles and yellow jackets. They prefer wooded and shrubby areas, but may use meadows, clear-cuts, burned areas, riparian areas and forested areas as travel corridors. Most sightings on Eglin have occurred in the interstitial areas. During winter, bears may hibernate in tree cavities, under logs and rocks, in banks, caves, culverts, and in shallow depressions. Black bears can occur anywhere on Eglin AFB. Eglin's black bear management consists of reducing the density of forest roads, seasonally closing certain management units to vehicular use, prescribed burning, and data collection.

##### **Gopher Tortoise Habitat**

The gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*) is a threatened species in Florida. The primary habitat of the gopher tortoise is the Longleaf Pine Sandhills community, however, it also occurs in Sand Pine Scrub, Longleaf Pine Flatwoods, and other natural and disturbed communities. The gopher tortoise is considered a keystone species. A keystone species is a species whose presence is ecologically significant to the survival of other species within its environment. Over 300 animals utilize the tortoise burrows; the tortoises disperse seeds while foraging; and their



burrowing behavior turns over nutrients in the soil. Thousands of acres of gopher tortoise habitat have been restored on Eglin AFB through prescribed burning. At Eglin, gopher tortoise burrows have been noted at Test Areas B-12, C-52C, C-52E, B-70 and C-62, interstitial areas and Eglin Main.

### **Indigo Snake Habitat**

The eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais*), a federally listed endangered species, is the largest non-venomous snake in North America. Habitat loss and fragmentation is the primary reason for the decline and listing of this species. Movement along travel corridors between seasonal habitats exposes this snake to danger from increased contact with humans. On Eglin, indigo snakes can be found in a wide variety of habitats. However, during winter denning season (December through April), they are most likely to be found in upland sandhill habitats, usually in association with gopher tortoise burrows. During other seasons, indigos can be found in almost any other habitat type but are most likely to be found foraging or seeking shade on the edges of wetlands or in creek bottoms.

### **Migratory Bird Habitat**

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 703-712; 1997-Supp) and EO13186, *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, protect migratory birds and their habitats and establish a permitting process for legal taking. A migratory bird is defined by the USFWS as any species or family of birds that lives, reproduces, or migrates within or across international borders at some point during their annual life cycle. For normal and routine operations such as installation support functions, actions of the DoD may not result in pursuit, hunting, taking, capturing, killing, possession, or transportation of any migratory bird, bird part, nest, or egg thereof, except as permitted. The DoD must address these routine operations through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) developed in accordance with EO 13186 (DoD and USFWS, 2006). Under the 2003 National Defense Authorization Act, the Armed Forces are exempted from the incidental taking of migratory birds during military readiness activities, except in cases where an activity would likely cause a significant adverse effect to the population of a migratory bird species. As detailed in the final rule in the Federal Register [50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 21], in this situation the Armed Forces, in cooperation with the USFWS, must develop and implement conservation measures to mitigate or minimize the significant adverse impacts (Federal Register, 2007).

### **Invasive Plant Species**

Invasive non-native plant species have been documented at many locations across Eglin AFB. The most problematic areas with invasive plant species concerns are associated with the urban interface where illegal dumping and natural seed dispersal from private property have allowed establishment of invasive species on adjacent Air Force property. The Eglin main base has several areas of concern involving invasive non-native plant species because of the urban interface and past landscaping practices where Chinese tallow and other invasive plant species were used in main base housing and other landscapes. Road construction and maintenance activities have introduced and spread cogon grass and torpedo grass to areas of the Eglin reservation road system and adjacent natural areas.

The Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) has developed a ranking system for invasive non-native plants as to their invasiveness in natural areas. *Category I* species are those species that are altering native plant communities by displacing native species, changing community structures or ecological functions, or hybridizing with native species. This definition does not rely on the economic severity or geographic range of the problem, but on the documented ecological damage. *Category II* species are those species that have increased in abundance or frequency but have not yet altered Florida plant communities. These species may be ranked *Category I*, if ecological damage is demonstrated (FLEPPC's 2005 List of Invasive Species).

To date, 18 *Category I* and 8 *Category II* species have been documented on Eglin AFB. Chinese tallow, or popcorn tree (*Triadica sebifera*), cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrical*), Japanese climbing fern (*Lygodium japonicum*), Chinese privet/hedge (*Ligustrum sinense*), and torpedo grass (*Panicum repens*) have been prioritized as the most problematic of the *Category I* species impacting Eglin ecosystems. Many of Eglin's high quality natural areas and sensitive species are threatened by these non-native invasive species. Several other invasive non-native plant species have been documented on Eglin, but are not yet considered major problem species. Among those species are:

### Category 1

- Mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*)
- Asparagus fern (*Asparagus aethiopicus*)
- Camphor-tree (*Cinnamomum camphora*)
- Wild taro (*Colocasia esculenta*)
- Air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*)
- Water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*)
- Lantana (*Lantana camera*)
- Glossy privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*)
- Japanese honeysuckle (*Lygodium japonicum*)
- Nandina / heavenly bamboo (*Nandina domestica*)
- Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*)
- Natal grass (*Rhynchelytrum repens*)
- Tropical soda apple (*Solanum viarum*)

### Category II

- Tung oil tree (*Aleurites fordii*) (= *Vernicia fordii*)
- Alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*)
- Coral vine (*Antigonon leptopus*)
- Silverthorn (*Elaeagnus pungens*)
- Chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*)
- Chinese brake fern (*Pteris vittata*)
- Purple sesban/rattlebox (*Sesbania punicea*)
- Chinese wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*)

### **3.2 CULTURAL RESOURCES**

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires that federal agencies analyze the impacts of federal undertakings on historic properties and cultural resources in general. Cultural resources on Eglin include evidence of prehistoric or historic human activities older than 50 years B.P. (before present). Additionally, in the case of Eglin AFB and other military facilities, all “Cold War” military resources (1946 to 1989) must be considered as protected resources until fully evaluated.

Emphasis is placed on identifying and protecting cultural resources considered Eligible or Potentially Eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Areas of concern include previously unsurveyed property determined to have a high probability for the occurrence of cultural resources and significant historic properties. As these information fields are continuously being updated, consultation with Eglin Cultural Resources (96 CEG/CEVH) is required on a project by project basis to obtain the latest information for any activities that might impact NRHP listed or eligible resource.

Due to restrictions under AFI 32-7065, any information on cultural resources outside the boundaries of Eglin AFB will be shown as areas of general avoidance whether these areas contain: High Probability Survey areas, Archaeological Sites, Historic Structures, Cemeteries, etc. Descriptions of all of these resources will be provided wherever any one may be impacted. In addition, Cold War Military structures may be considered as structures eligible to the NRHP and are not included in this data. Any work taking place on Eglin must be conducted in consultation with 96 CEG/CEVH to determine and mitigate any potential affects to significant cultural resources prior to initiation of the activity. If cultural resources are serendipitously discovered during construction activities, all work will be stopped until the Base Historic Preservation Officer can evaluate the find.

#### **Cultural Restricted Areas**

Cultural Restricted Areas are areas where impacts to resources are likely to occur due to project activities. These can be eligible resource locations that are known or areas where there is a high probability of resources being present. These areas can be restricted by barriers such as fencing, GPS location or shown as restricted on a map.

### **3.3 NOISE**

The Noise Control Act of 1972 (Public Law 92-574) directs federal agencies to comply with applicable federal, state, interstate, and local noise control regulations. Sound quality criteria disseminated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the DoD have identified noise levels to protect public health and welfare with an adequate margin of safety.

Noise is defined as any unwanted sound. Defining characteristics of noise include sound level (amplitude), frequency (pitch), and duration. Each of these characteristics plays a role in determining the intrusiveness and level of impact of the noise on a noise receptor. The term “noise receptor” is used in this document to mean any person, animal, or object that hears or is affected by noise.

Sound levels are measured on a logarithmic decibel (dB) scale, reflecting the relative way in which differences in sound energy levels are perceived. Annoyance, speech interference, sleep interference, human health impacts, structural damage, and wildlife impacts have all been associated with noise.

Because both the duration and frequency of noise events also play a role in determining overall noise impact, several metrics could be used that account for these factors. Two common metrics are:

- Sound Exposure Level (SEL) accounts for both the maximum sound level and the length of time a sound lasts. SEL does not directly represent the sound level heard at any given time. Rather, it provides a measure of the total sound exposure for an entire event compressed into one second. This metric is useful for comparing fast-moving and slow-moving aircraft and is a good predictor of several noise impacts including sleep disturbance and speech interference.
- Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) represents aircraft noise level averaged over a 24-hour period with a 10 dB penalty to flights occurring between 10:00 PM and 7:00 AM to account for the added intrusiveness of noise during these hours. It is important to recognize that the DNL metric does not represent the noise heard at any single point in time, but rather a weighted average level of noise events that occur over the course of a day. The DNL metric has been endorsed by several federal agencies as being the best descriptor of general noise conditions in the vicinity of airfields (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA], 1974; FICUN, 1980).

The USEPA has recommended that noise level in sleeping areas be less than 45 dB DNL (USEPA, 1974). As modern homes typically provide an exterior-interior noise level reduction of greater than 20 dB (U.S. Navy, 2005), residential areas in areas where noise is higher than 65 DNL are assumed to not meet this recommendation. Studies indicate a tendency for humans to habituate to regularly occurring nighttime noise over time, eventually reducing susceptibility to noise-induced sleep disturbance (Fidell et al., 1995; Pearsons et al., 1995; Kryter, 1984).

The USEPA recommends that, to protect public health with an adequate margin of safety, exterior noise levels should not exceed 55 dB DNL and interior noise levels should not exceed 45 dB DNL in noise-sensitive locations (USEPA, 1974). The Federal Interagency Committee on Urban Noise (FICUN) took these recommendations into consideration when developing its recommendations on compatibility of land uses with noise (FICUN, 1980). These recommendations have been adopted, with minor modifications, by the Department of Defense (DoDI 4165.57).

### **3.4 SOCIOECONOMIC RESOURCES**

#### **Outdoor Recreation**

Currently, the land use at the proposed site is open to public access for recreational activities year-round. The site falls within Management Unit 5 (U.S. Air Force, 2007), which is open year-round and is classified as an archery hunting area. Historically, deer densities have been

low in this area, making it a somewhat unpopular hunting area (Personal communication with Mr. Justin Johnson, May 2008).

## 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter describes the potential environmental consequences. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidelines, and 32 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 989, et seq., the description of the environmental consequences focuses on those resources and conditions potentially subject to impacts. The Automated Site Evaluation Tool (ASET), a geospatial tool designed to evaluate environmental impacts of proposed undertakings, was used to determine which environmental resources might be impacted by the Proposed Action. ASET eliminated several resources and excluded them from further analysis due to the high probability of no significant impacts. These resources are listed in Section 6.

The Proposed Action will involve site clearing, construction of electrical service to support range lighting, concrete pavement as part of the skeet & trap stations (concrete lanes and pads), various sidewalks to provide “barrier free” access to the clubhouse, restrooms with associated septic tank and drain field, non-potable water well and parking lot. Asphalt pavement will eventually be installed to support vehicle parking requirements (although gravel parking is anticipated initially due to cost constraints). Several small concrete block structures (trap houses) will be constructed. It is anticipated that the clubhouse and restrooms will be located on a portable trailer in the near term. Typical construction activities involve the building of structures utilizing standard construction equipment (bulldozers, front-end loaders, etc.). This type of activity also typically involves earth movement and grading for foundation set-up. These activities will result in short term disturbance of noise and traffic. Air quality is expected to be minimally affected during construction activities but well below any state standards for air quality. No air quality issues are anticipated during range operations.

### Commonalities – Lead Management

Perhaps the greatest environmental concern for this project is risk associated with lead contamination. In an effort to ensure the proposed action does not cause a lead contamination problem, AFSOC reviewed over 30 environmental cleanup documents and conducted investigations with environmental regulatory agencies, skeet range managers, and lead contamination experts across the U.S. The result of this investigation revealed that skeet ranges can be built in an environmentally-benign manner thus eliminating potential impacts from lead. At the cornerstone of this investigation, experts such as Dr. Richard Peddicord (Dick Peddicord and Company, Inc.) explain how 300 sources of scientific studies such as the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufactures Institute Study indicate that lead mobility is unlikely to cause a real environmental impact at many ranges and that there are proactive steps that ranges can take to protect the environment (Pedicord, 1996). Another 2004 study by Donald J. Rimstidt, James R. Craig and Caleb D. Sheetz, of Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University titled *"Lead Behavior at National Forest Shooting Ranges"* concluded similar results stating that “shooting on controlled ranges reduces the overall risk to the public from lead in the environment” and that “lead is not having an environmental impact at or near the U.S. Forest Service firing range near Blacksburg” (GSA, 2004).

In addition, two guidance documents were utilized to plan this proposed action. These

documents, the EPA/FDEP Range BMP Manuals provided guidance on proper siting, management, and operation of a skeet range. These manuals provide a strong framework to ensure lead is adequately contained and controlled. These manuals were prepared in conjunction with many different lead/range experts from the EPA, Air Force, Navy, State of Florida/Massachusetts Environmental Offices, National Rifle Association, The National Shooting Sports Foundation, The Wildlife Management Institute, Dr. Richard Peddicord, the Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Academy, Vargas and Associates, several Florida Colleges/Technical Schools, several Florida Sheriff's Offices and numerous other shooting ranges. The introduction of the EPA Range Manual clearly states, "These practices have been proven to effectively reduce or eliminate lead contamination." The FDEP Range Manual states, "the range management ideas presented in this manual are intended to help minimize, or even eliminate, the amount of lead that breaks down and poses a problem during the active life of a range." These manuals have proven their effectiveness if the requirements are strictly adhered to. In addition, the FDEP BMP Manual Appendix A, Sections A-5, A-6, A-7, A-8 and A-9 all describe Case Studies of model "clean" ranges utilizing the EPA/FDEP BMP Range Manuals (FDEP, 2004).

### **Commonalities - Biological Resources**

Impacts to wildlife would not be significant under the proposed or alternative actions.

Potential impacts for the Florida black bear are associated with the potential for increased human-bear interaction and land clearing. While clearing would result in the loss of potential black bear habitat, the bear's avoidance of the area due to increase human presence and noise may serve to benefit the bear through decreased bear-traffic related incidents. The project shall also include bear proof trash cans, where applicable.

Each of these areas is fire suppressed due to their location and are not optimal habitat for gopher tortoises, indigo snakes or Florida pine snakes. However, any gopher tortoises present may be impacted due to burrow collapse during construction activities. Prior to any land disturbing activities, a survey of the proposed and alternative areas to evaluate the presence of any gopher tortoise burrows shall be conducted. Any relocation of tortoises shall be coordinated through Eglin's Natural Resources Section (96 CEG/CEVSN).

The eastern indigo snake, Florida pine snake, and Florida black bear may pass through the project area; however, the habitat in the area is degraded due to fire suppression, with a dense understory and sand pine encroachment. Potential impacts to the indigo snake and Florida pine snake would be the same at the proposed and alternative site. Habitat loss to the bear would be minimal, as the site represents less than 0.1 percent of the total area of undeveloped lands on Eglin AFB, which provides black bear habitat throughout the Eglin Range.

### **4.1 PROPOSED ACTION**

The following resources were found to be potentially impacted from activities associated with the Proposed Action:

#### **4.1.1 Biological Resources**

##### **Black Bear**

The Proposed Action will potentially impact approximately 24 acres of black bear habitat and has the potential to cause adverse impacts to the resource. The species is not federally listed; therefore consultation with the USFWS is not required. Coordination with 96 CEG/CEVSN is required prior to project initiation.

##### *Management Requirements*

Mission/project personnel will be made aware that the Proposed Action activity occurs within known habitat. Personnel will be educated to recognize the species and avoid it if encountered. Bears are not to be approached and will be allowed to move away without harassment. If a bear is encountered, the Natural Resources personnel (96 CEG/CEVSN) will be notified. The Air Force shall adhere to the following site-specific mitigation measures to help significantly reduce any direct and indirect impacts.

- The Air Force shall direct personnel to cease any activities if a black bear is sighted and allow the animal sufficient time to move away from the site on its own before resuming any activities. In the event of a sighting, Eglin's Natural Resources Section shall be contacted immediately.
- The Air Force shall restrict vehicular traffic to established roads and paved areas.
- The Air Force shall maintain at least a 100-foot vegetated buffer along any nearby surface waters.
- The Air Force shall utilize erosion control measures such as silt fencing along nearby surface waters.
- The Air Force shall use bear proof trash cans where appropriate.

##### **Gopher Tortoise Habitat**

The Proposed Action will potentially impact approximately 24 acres of gopher tortoise habitat and has the potential to cause adverse impacts to the resource. Coordination with 96 CEG/CEVSN is required to determine extent of impacts and possible tortoise relocation, if needed.

##### *Management Requirements*

A survey of the area is required prior to project initiation. In addition, the Air Force shall adhere to the following site-specific mitigation measures, which would help to significantly reduce any direct or indirect impacts.

- Prior to clearing, AFSOC shall conduct surveys for gopher tortoises. If any gopher tortoises are found, the FWC will be contacted for a relocation permit, and animals will be relocated to another area on Eglin according to FWC guidelines.
- The Air Force shall provide project personnel with a description of the species, including information on its behaviors, its protection under federal law, and instructions not to injure, harm, or kill this species.
- AFSOC shall direct personnel to cease any activities if a gopher tortoise is sighted and allow the animal sufficient time to move away from the site on its own before resuming any activities. In the event of a sighting, Eglin's Natural Resources Section shall be contacted immediately.
- AFSOC shall restrict vehicular traffic to established roads and paved areas.
- AFSOC shall maintain at least a 100-foot vegetated buffer along any nearby surface waters.



- AFSOC shall utilize erosion control measures such as silt fencing along nearby surface waters.

### **Indigo Snake Habitat**

The Proposed Action will potentially impact approximately 24 acres of indigo snake habitat. Scope and location of the activity is not likely to result in adverse impacts to the resource. This species has not been documented at Eglin AFB since 1995, thus no formal Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be required (Personal communication with Mr. Bob Miller (96 CEG/CEVSN), April 2008). Coordination with 96 CEG/CEVSN is required prior to project initiation.

### *Management Requirements*

A survey of the area is required prior to project initiation. Avoidance of the resource would mitigate the need for consultation. If an eastern indigo snake is discovered during the survey process and does not move off on its own, then the NRS would have to relocate the snake in accordance with the established consultation process. The Air Force shall adhere to the following site-specific mitigation measures to help significantly reduce any direct and indirect impacts:

- Prior to clearing, AFSOC shall conduct surveys for indigo snakes. If any animals are found, apply to the FWC for a relocation permit, and relocate these animals to another area on Eglin according to FWC guidelines.
- AFSOC shall provide project personnel with a description of the species, including information on its behaviors, its protection under federal law, and instructions not to injure, harm, or kill this species.
- AFSOC shall direct personnel to cease any activities if an indigo snake is sighted and allow the animal sufficient time to move away from the site on its own before resuming any activities. In the event of a sighting, Eglin's Natural Resources Section shall be contacted immediately.
- AFSOC shall restrict vehicular traffic to established roads and paved areas.
- AFSOC shall maintain at least a 100-foot vegetated buffer along any nearby surface waters.
- AFSOC shall utilize erosion control measures such as silt fencing along nearby surface waters.

### **Invasive Plants**

No invasive nonnative plant species have been documented within any of the skeet range Alternative locations. Disturbance to soil and vegetation from land clearing and construction could enhance conditions for the establishment and spread of invasive nonnative plant species. Because the majority of the project area would be covered by buildings, pavement, or landscaped areas, areas with the proper environment for the establishment of invasive nonnative plants would be minimal. Additionally, all landscaping and plantings of vegetation would conform to the Presidential Memorandum dated 26 April 1994, *Environmentally and Economically Beneficial Practices on Federal Landscaped Grounds*, and Executive Order 13112, *Invasive Species*, both of which require the planting of regional natives in landscaping. Mitigations available to reduce the potential for invasive nonnative species infestations are:

- To reduce potential seed sources, AFSOC shall treat areas with known invasive nonnative species problems.
- To avoid spreading invasive nonnative species, AFSOC shall not drive vehicles in areas with known invasive non-native species problems. If a vehicle is driven in such an infested area,

- clean the vehicle before it is driven to a noninfested area.
- AFSOC shall use only native plants for landscaping.

Impacts from invasive nonnative plant species to biological resources would not be significant under any of the alternatives.

### **Migratory Bird Habitat**

The Proposed Action would potentially impact approximately 24 acres of migratory bird habitat and has the potential to cause adverse impacts to the resource. To avoid impacts to migratory birds, land clearing should occur on or after September 1 through March 15 to avoid the nesting season. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) does not contain any prohibition that applies to the destruction of a migratory bird nest alone (without birds or eggs), provided that no possession occurs during the destruction (USFWS, 2005). If clearing occurs before September 1, care will be taken to leave snags in place. If snags need to be removed for construction purposes, they may be removed after September 1. Coordination with 96 CEG/CEVSN is required prior to project initiation to ensure compliance with the MBTA.

### **4.1.2 Cultural Resources**

#### **Cultural Restricted Areas**

The area identified for the proposed action has been surveyed and a draft report has been reviewed by the 96 CEG/CEVH. No eligible resources were encountered. The final report will be forwarded to the SHPO on, or about June 18. The SHPO has 45 days to review. Concurrence with the report is expected. However, the SHPO will make the final determination. If cultural resources are serendipitously discovered, all work will be stopped until the Base Historic Preservation Officer can evaluate the find. Although no resources were located within the project area, eligible resources exist nearby. While impact to this resource is not expected, possible adverse effects will have to be taken under consideration during presently planned and any future construction and use activities.

#### *Management Requirements*

Consultation with Eglin's Cultural Resource Management office (96 CEG/CEVH) is required. Once SHPO concurrence is received, there are no management restrictions for the preferred alternative. However, the eligible resource in close proximity must be protected from impact. This includes, but is not limited to, staging of equipment, installation of utility lines, plumbing, road repair or expansion or any other ground disturbing activity within the resource area. Therefore, coordination with CEVH is required if these types of activities are conducted.

### **4.1.3 Noise**

Eglin AFB is home to numerous noise sources such as aircraft noise, munitions use, and small arms noise. Responses to noise vary, depending on the type and characteristics of the noise, the expected level of noise, the distance between the noise source and the receptor, the receptor's sensitivity, and the time of day. For the proposed skeet range, the nearest public housing areas are not likely to be exposed to small arms noise at greater than 65 DNL as the noise from small arms fire would not occur at great frequency or intensity. Furthermore, because the proposed

range would only operate during the daytime (before sunset), nighttime noise levels will not be affected by the skeet range.

The Eglin Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (U.S. Air Force, 2005) revealed the results of a study on a group of shooting ranges for the Army 7th Special Forces Group (7SFG). Munitions typically much louder than would be used on a skeet range (e.g .50 caliber) did not exceed 65 DNL beyond 1.25 miles of the range group. The annual number of rounds expended was also much greater, with the 7SFG(A) ranges (1.2 million rounds/yr) using 483% more rounds than the current proposal (210,500 rounds/yr). This provides further support that the proposed skeet and trap range, which would shoot fewer, smaller munitions would have much less than a 1.25 mile impacted area. The closest housing area to the proposed action site is approximately 1 mile away, so impulse noise impacts are unlikely.

#### **4.1.4 Socioeconomic**

##### **Outdoor Recreation**

Currently, the land use at the proposed site is open to public access for recreational activities. The site falls within Management Unit 5, which is open year-round and is classified as an archery hunting area. Historically, deer densities have been low in this area, making it a somewhat unpopular hunting area (Personal communication with Mr. Justin Johnson, May 2008).

Construction of a skeet and trap range would necessitate closing the site to hunting. However, because the site is not ideal for deer hunting, the skeet range would likely provide better recreational opportunities than currently exist on the site. For this reason, the beneficial impact of new recreational opportunities likely offsets any adverse affects resulting from the closure of the site to hunting.

#### **4.2 ALTERNATIVE 1: WEST TIMBERLAKE**

The following resources were found to be potentially impacted from activities associated with the Alternate Action:

##### **4.2.1 Biological Resources**

###### **Black Bear**

The alternate action would potentially impact approximately 24 acres of black bear habitat and has the potential to cause adverse impacts to the resource. The species is not federally listed, therefore consultation with the USFWS is not required. Coordination with 96 CEG/CEVSN is required prior to project initiation.

###### *Management Requirements*

Mission/project personnel should be aware that activity occurs within known habitat. Personnel should be educated to recognize the species and avoid it if encountered. Bears are not to be approached and should be allowed to move away without harassment. If a bear is encountered, notify Natural Resources personnel (96 CEG/CEVSN). The Air Force shall adhere to the following site-specific mitigation measures to help significantly reduce any direct and indirect impacts.

- AFSCOC shall direct personnel to cease any activities if a black bear is sighted and allow the animal sufficient time to move away from the site on its own before resuming any activities. In the event of a sighting, Eglin's Natural Resources Section shall be contacted immediately.
- AFSOC shall restrict vehicular traffic to established roads and paved areas.
- AFSOC shall maintain at least a 100-foot vegetated buffer along any nearby surface waters.
- AFSOC shall utilize erosion control measures such as silt fencing along nearby surface waters.
- AFSOC shall use bear proof trash cans where appropriate.

### **Gopher Tortoise Habitat**

The alternate action would potentially impact approximately 24 acres of gopher tortoise habitat and has the potential to cause adverse impacts to the resource. The 96 CEG/CEVSN will complete a gopher tortoise survey prior to project initiation. Any gopher tortoise discovered will be relocated in accordance with FWS guidelines and permitting requirements. The 96 CEG/CEVSN will obtain all necessary permits prior to relocation of any gopher tortoise.

#### *Management Requirements*

A survey of the area is required prior to project initiation. In addition, the Air Force shall adhere to the following site-specific mitigation measures, which would help to significantly reduce any direct and indirect impacts.

- Prior to clearing, AFSOC shall conduct surveys for gopher tortoises. If any gopher tortoises are found, the FWC will be contacted for a relocation permit, and animals will be relocated to another area on Eglin according to FWC guidelines.
- AFSOC shall provide project personnel with a description of the species, including information on its behaviors, its protection under federal law, and instructions not to injure, harm, or kill this species.
- AFSOC shall direct personnel to cease any activities if a gopher tortoise is sighted and allow the animal sufficient time to move away from the site on its own before resuming any activities. In the event of a sighting, Eglin's Natural Resources Section shall be contacted immediately.
- AFSOC shall restrict vehicular traffic to established roads and paved areas.

### **Indigo Snake Habitat**

The alternate action would potentially impact approximately 24 acres of indigo snake habitat. The scope and location of the activity is not likely to result in adverse impacts to the resource. This species has not been documented at Eglin AFB since 1995, thus no formal Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be required (Personal communication with Mr. Bob Miller (96 CEG/CEVSN), April 2008). Coordination with 96 CEG/CEVSN is required prior to project initiation.

#### *Management Requirements*

A survey of the area is required prior to project initiation. Avoidance of the resource would mitigate the need for consultation. The Air Force shall adhere to the following site-specific mitigation measures to help significantly reduce any direct or indirect impacts.

- Prior to clearing, AFSOC shall conduct surveys for indigo snakes. If any animals are found, the FWC will be contacted for a relocation permit, and animals will be relocated to another area on Eglin according to FWC guidelines.



- AFSOC shall provide project personnel with a description of the species, including information on its behaviors, its protection under federal law, and instructions not to injure, harm, or kill this species.
- AFSOC shall direct personnel to cease any activities if an indigo snake is sighted and allow the animal sufficient time to move away from the site on its own before resuming any activities. In the event of a sighting, Eglin's Natural Resources Section shall be contacted immediately.
- AFSOC shall restrict vehicular traffic to established roads and paved areas.
- AFSOC shall maintain at least a 100-foot vegetated buffer along any nearby surface waters.
- AFSOC shall utilize erosion control measures such as silt fencing along nearby surface waters.

### **Invasive Plants**

No invasive nonnative plant species have been documented within any of the skeet range Alternative locations. Disturbance to soil and vegetation from land clearing and construction could enhance conditions for the establishment and spread of invasive nonnative plant species. Because the majority of the project area would be covered by buildings, pavement, or landscaped areas, areas with the proper environment for the establishment of invasive nonnative plants would be minimal. Additionally, all landscaping and plantings of vegetation would conform to the Presidential Memorandum dated 26 April 1994, *Environmentally and Economically Beneficial Practices on Federal Landscaped Grounds*, and Executive Order 13112, *Invasive Species*, both of which require the planting of regional natives in landscaping. Mitigations available to reduce the potential for invasive nonnative species infestations are:

- To reduce potential seed sources, AFSOC shall treat areas with known invasive nonnative species problems.
- To avoid spreading invasive nonnative species, AFSOC shall not drive vehicles in areas with known invasive non-native species problems. If a vehicle is driven in such an infested area, clean the vehicle before it is driven to a noninfested area.
- AFSOC shall use only native plants for landscaping.

Impacts from invasive nonnative plant species to biological resources would not be significant under any of the alternatives.

### **Migratory Bird Habitat**

The Alternative Action would potentially impact approximately 24 acres of migratory bird habitat and has the potential to cause adverse impacts to the resource. To avoid impacts to migratory birds, land clearing should occur on or after September 1 through March 15 to avoid the nesting season. The MBTA does not contain any prohibition that applies to the destruction of a migratory bird nest alone (without birds or eggs), provided that no possession occurs during the destruction (USFWS, 2005). If clearing occurs before September 1, care will be taken to leave snags in place. If snags need to be removed for construction purposes, they may be removed after September 1. Coordination with 96 CEG/CEVSN is required prior to project initiation to ensure compliance with the MBTA.

## **4.2.2 Cultural Resources**

### **Cultural Restricted Areas**

Previous cultural resource surveys have been conducted within a portion of the project location. No eligible resources were recovered during investigations and reports of these surveys have received SHPO concurrence. If this location is chosen, an archaeological survey of the area that remains culturally restricted will be required.

### *Management Requirements*

Consultation with Eglin's Cultural Resource Management office (96 CEG/CEVH) is required to coordinate construction activities. If the alternative location is chosen, an archaeological survey will be required. SHPO concurrence must be final before the project begins. If eligible resources are discovered during the survey these resources must be avoided during construction and use activities. If impact to resources cannot be avoided, site testing or data recovery may be necessary.

## **4.2.3 Noise**

The off-range area impacted by skeet range noise under Alternative 1 is the same as the Proposed Action. However, because the alternative site is closer to housing developments (0.5 mile versus 1 mile for the preferred alternative), there is a greater chance that they could be exposed to small arms noise of greater than 65 DNL.

## **4.2.4 Socioeconomic Resources**

### **Outdoor Recreation**

Currently, the land use at the alternative site is open to public access for recreational activities, but closed to hunting. Short segments of existing biking trails could be affected. Effects would be minimal, however, due to the existence of an estimated 26 miles of trail in the area (Personal communication with Justin Johnson, June 2008). For this reason locating the range at the alternative site would not be likely to result in an adverse impact to recreational opportunities in the area.

## **4.3 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No Action alternative, activities associated with the Proposed Action or other action alternatives would not occur. Consequently, the environment within and adjacent to the alternative locations would remain as baseline and there would be no impacts to the resource areas beyond the scope of normal conditions and influences at these locations.

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## **5.0 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS AND IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES**

### **5.1 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

According to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, cumulative effects analysis in an environmental assessment should consider the potential environmental impacts resulting from “the incremental impacts of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions” (40 CFR 1508.7).

#### **Definition of Cumulative Effects**

Cumulative effects may occur when there is a relationship between a Proposed Action and other actions expected to occur in a similar location or during a similar time period. This relationship may or may not be obvious. Actions overlapping with or in close proximity to the Proposed Action can reasonably be expected to have more potential for cumulative effects on “shared resources” than actions that may be geographically separated. Similarly, actions that coincide temporally will tend to offer a higher potential for cumulative effects.

In this Environmental Assessment, an effort has been made to identify all actions on or near the action area that are being considered and are in the planning stage at this time. To the extent details regarding such actions exist and the actions have a potential to interact with the Proposed Action outlined in this EA, these actions are included in the cumulative analysis.

### **5.2 PAST, PRESENT, AND REASONABLY FORESEEABLE ACTIONS**

This EA applies a stepped approach to provide decision makers with not only the cumulative effects of the Proposed Action, Alternatives, and No Action Alternative, but also the incremental contribution of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions.

#### **Past and Present Actions Relevant to the Proposed Action and Alternative**

There are no other actions, either past or present, in or near the project site found to be relevant to the Proposed Action, Alternatives, or No Action Alternative (e.g. construction projects).

#### **Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions**

One reasonably foreseeable future large development relevant to the Proposed Action, Alternatives, or No Action Alternative has been identified. The U.S. Air Force is accelerating the improvement of Military Family Housing (MFH) through privatization. This improvement process involves the demolition, construction, and renovation of MFH units through implementation of the MFH Initiative, otherwise known as MFH Privatization, at Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was initiated to assess the impacts in the region from this proposed project.

Other actions that may be taking place nearby in the future, but whose relevance is questionable or for which insufficient information is available for analysis, include the Emerald Coast Technology and Research Campus, the AAFES Lifestyle Center, and a biomass power plant. All of these facilities have the potential to be located within 2.5 miles of the proposed action.



## **5.3 ANALYSIS OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

### **Socioeconomics**

Beneficial impacts to employment and labor have not been identified with respect to implementation of the Proposed Action. The impacts to anyone in the surrounding community are not anticipated to be significant. No adverse impacts to socioeconomics have been identified in available analyses of the foreseeable future actions. The activities associated with the MFH privatization would provide beneficial impacts to employment and labor. Thus, no negative cumulative impacts are expected to occur.

### **Utilities**

Impacts related to utilities and their associated infrastructure encompass no significant increase in the use of utilities in the area. The implementation of the Proposed Action would not burden the Okaloosa County Water or Sewer Treatment Plant as wastewater would be treated onsite. Drinking water needs would be supplied by bottled water and thus, no impacts associated with the usage of potable water are anticipated. The increase in electrical demand would be minor. Electrical usage would include interior lighting and ancillary lighting fixtures along pathways. Therefore, no cumulative utility impacts would be expected.

### **Soils/Erosion**

Past development in various locations of Eglin AFB have likely contributed to erosion and soil loss. However, the extent to which this has occurred is difficult to determine. Implementation of the Proposed Action would involve the utilization of erosion control measures to minimize the potential for erosion to adversely impact adjacent wetland areas and water quality. No adverse impacts on soils and erosion have been identified in available analyses of the foreseeable future actions. As a result, implementation of the Proposed Action and/or foreseeable future actions would not likely contribute in any appreciable manner to erosion that has occurred in the past.

### **Water Quality**

Increases in impervious surface from the Proposed Action would be minor and would not promote a significant increase in stormwater runoff. The BMPs (discussed earlier) would help mitigate the adverse impacts and ensure water quality at the proposed project site. No adverse impacts on water quality have been identified in available analyses of the foreseeable future actions. As a result, no cumulative impacts associated with water quality are expected to occur.

### **Biological Resources**

The decrease in available land for biological resources as a result of the Proposed Action would be minor and would not present a significant loss of habitat. The disturbed land area represents a loss of less than 0.1 percent of all available land at Eglin AFB. No adverse impacts to biological resources have been identified in available analyses of the foreseeable future actions. As a result, no cumulative impacts associated with the available habitat for biological resources are expected to occur.

### **Transportation**

No proposed or reasonably foreseeable road developments are expected to substantially affect the capacity of the existing road network in the study area. Neither the Proposed Action nor the

MFH privatization project would involve net increases in population of the immediate area. However, incremental impacts to the local road network would likely occur from the redistribution of residents and if future military actions require additional personnel to move to the area. However, as is typical of community development and planning, county and state transportation boards would assess the need for road improvements and make accommodations accordingly. Thus, there would be no contribution to other project impacts.

#### **Noise**

No adverse noise impacts have been identified for the Proposed Action or the reasonably foreseeable future actions. All projects would create only short-term, intermittent increases in noise levels, which would not exceed current levels created by the airfield. Thus, no adverse cumulative impacts would occur.

#### **5.4 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES**

NEPA requires that environmental analysis include identification of any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources that will be involved in the Proposed Action should it be implemented. Irreversible and irretrievable resource commitments are related to the use of nonrenewable resources and the effects that the uses of these resources have on future generations. Irreversible effects primarily result from the use or destruction of a specific resource such as energy and minerals that cannot be replaced within a reasonable time frame. Irretrievable resource commitments involve the loss in value of an affected resource that cannot be restored as a result of the action, such as extinction of a threatened or endangered species or the disturbance of a cultural site.

Development of the proposed site may result in an irreversible and/or irretrievable commitment of natural resources as the undeveloped nature of this area would be altered. However, although difficult, this area could be returned to its existing state if the proposed complex was removed and the area was allowed to revert back to its present state.

Construction activities would require consumption of limited amounts of materials typically associated with interior and exterior construction (e.g. concrete, wiring, piping, insulation, and windows). The amount of these materials used is not expected to significantly decrease the availability of the resources. Small amounts of nonrenewable resources would be used, however, these amounts are not considered to be significant and are not expected to affect the availability of these resources.

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## **6.0 RESOURCES EVALUATED BUT EXCLUDED FROM ANALYSIS**

### **Air Quality**

Aboveground Storage Tanks

### **Biological Resources**

Alligator Snapping Turtle

Bald Eagle

Bog Frogs

Darter Streams

Ecological Condition Model Tier I Habitat

Flatwood Salamanders

Gulf Sturgeon

Invasive Non-Native Species

Outstanding Florida Waters

Piping Plover

RCW Habitat

SE American Kestrel

Shore Birds

Aquatic Preserves

Beach Mouse

Burrowing Owl

Dusky Gopher Frog

Essential Fish Habitat

Gopher Tortoise

Indigo Snake

Marine Mammals

Perforate Lichen

RCW Active Tree

RCW Inactive Tree

Sea Turtles

Special Natural Areas

### **Cultural Resources**

Cemeteries

Historic Districts

### **Geology and Soils**

Moderate erodibility sands/sediments

Slope 15 or Greater

### **Hazardous and Toxic Materials**

AOC Sites

Underground Storage Tanks

IRP Sites

UXO Sites

### **Hydrology and Water Quality**

303d Listed waters

Ponds Seepage

Streams

Wetlands

FEMA 100 year floodplain

Slope Community

Wells

### **Socioeconomics**

Daycares

Housing Areas

Restricted Areas

Hospitals

Minority Populations

Schools

### **Utility Infrastructure**

Potable Water Wells

Potable Water Wells - Hurlburt

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## **7.0 LIST OF PREPARERS**

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Eglin AFB, FL 32542



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## 8.0 AGENCIES AND PERSONS CONSULTED

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Clark Vargas (personal communication)  
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Kathy Pauley (personal communication)  
Nellis AFB Skeet Range

Rick Patterson (personal communication)  
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Major Mark Allen  
HQ AFSOC/JA



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## 9.0 REFERENCES

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## **APPENDIX A – AGENCY CORRESPONDENCE**

## **FEDERAL AGENCY COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT (CZMA) NEGATIVE DETERMINATION**

### **Introduction**

This document provides the State of Florida with the U.S. Air Force's Negative Determination under Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), 16 U.S.C. § 1456, and 15 C.F.R. Part 930.35. The information in this Negative Determination is provided pursuant to 15 C.F.R. Section 930.35.

This negative determination addresses the Proposed Action for the Hurlburt Field Skeet and Trap Club, Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), Florida (Figure 1).

### **Proposed Federal agency action:**

The Proposed Action (Figures 2 and 3) includes five skeet/trap stations, an access drive and parking for 30+ vehicles. The range would also include a 13 x 60 ft modular building to be utilized as a clubhouse with electrical service, men's and women's restroom facilities and associated septic tank and drain field. A secured ammunition storage area, (including a lockable steel fireproof container), for a limited amount of ammunition storage and non-potable water well is also proposed. Field Layout (Figure 4): Each of the five shooting fields would have three machines, one trap and two skeet. Each field would also have an 8 x 8 ft concrete block trap house (three above the ground and two below ground), an 8 x 8 ft high/low skeet house, concrete lanes and pads. This would be a shotgun-only facility and lead shot would be authorized.

The Air Force proposes to construct an environmentally-conscious skeet and trap range that supports shooting sports while providing a high degree of protection of the environment. Therefore, construction and operation of the range would include:

- Control and containment of lead shot
- Preventative measures to control lead migration in subsurface and surrounding surface water bodies
- Reoccurring removal and recycling of lead shot from the range
- Careful placement of shotfall zones to ensure spent lead shot does not fall into surface waters and wetlands
- Documentation and archiving of annual range activities

The Proposed Action would involve site clearing, construction of electrical service to support range operations, concrete pavement as part of the skeet and trap stations (concrete lanes and pads), various sidewalks to provide "barrier free" access to the clubhouse, restrooms with associated septic tank and drain field, non-potable water well, access driveway and parking lot. Asphalt pavement would eventually be installed to support vehicle parking requirements (although gravel parking is anticipated initially due to cost constraints). Several small concrete block structures (trap houses) would be constructed. It is anticipated that the clubhouse and restrooms would be a modular trailer

in the near term. Typical construction activities would occur involving site clearing, including tree and stump removal and the building of structures utilizing standard construction equipment (bull dozers, front-end loaders, etc.).

### **Federal Review**

After review of the Florida Coastal Management Program and its enforceable policies, the U.S. Air Force has made a determination that this activity would not have an effect on the state of Florida coastal zone or its resources.

## Florida Coastal Management Program Consistency Review

Statute	Consistency	Scope
Chapter 161 <i>Beach and Shore Preservation</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect beach and shore management, specifically as it pertains to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Coastal Construction Permit Program.</li> <li>• The Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL) Permit Program.</li> <li>• The Coastal Zone Protection Program.</li> </ul>	Authorizes the Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems within DEP to regulate construction on or seaward of the states' beaches.
Chapter 163, Part II <i>Growth Policy; County and Municipal Planning; Land Development Regulation</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect local government comprehensive plans.	Requires local governments to prepare, adopt, and implement comprehensive plans that encourage the most appropriate use of land and natural resources in a manner consistent with the public interest.
Chapter 186 <i>State and Regional Planning</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect state plans for water use, land development or transportation.	Details state-level planning efforts. Requires the development of special statewide plans governing water use, land development, and transportation.
Chapter 252 <i>Emergency Management</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect the state's vulnerability to natural disasters.  The Proposed Action would not affect emergency response and evacuation procedures.	Provides for planning and implementation of the state's response to, efforts to recover from, and the mitigation of natural and manmade disasters.
Chapter 253 <i>State Lands</i>	All activities would occur on federal property; therefore the Proposed Action would not affect state or public lands.	Addresses the state's administration of public lands and property of this state and provides direction regarding the acquisition, disposal, and management of all state lands.
Chapter 258 <i>State Parks and Preserves</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect state parks, recreational areas and aquatic preserves.	Addresses administration and management of state parks and preserves.
Chapter 259 <i>Land Acquisition for Conservation or Recreation</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect tourism and/or outdoor recreation.	Authorizes acquisition of environmentally endangered lands and outdoor recreation lands.
Chapter 260 <i>Recreational Trails System</i>	The Proposed Action would not include the acquisition of land and would not affect the Greenways and Trails Program.	Authorizes acquisition of land to create a recreational trails system and to facilitate management of the system.
Chapter 375 <i>Multipurpose Outdoor Recreation; Land Acquisition, Management, and Conservation</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect opportunities for recreation on state lands.	Develops comprehensive multipurpose outdoor recreation plan to document recreational supply and demand, describe current recreational opportunities, estimate need for

		additional recreational opportunities, and propose means to meet the identified needs.
Chapter 267 <i>Historical Resources</i>	The preferred sites were surveyed in 2008 for cultural resources and no eligible resources were encountered. Therefore the Proposed Action would not affect the cultural resources of the state.	Addresses management and preservation of the state's archaeological and historical resources.
Chapter 288 <i>Commercial Development and Capital Improvements</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect future business opportunities on state lands, or the promotion of tourism in the region.	Provides the framework for promoting and developing the general business, trade, and tourism components of the state economy.
Chapter 334 <i>Transportation Administration</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect transportation.	Addresses the state's policy concerning transportation administration.
Chapter 339 <i>Transportation Finance and Planning</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect the finance and planning needs of the state's transportation system.	Addresses the finance and planning needs of the state's transportation system.
Chapter 370 <i>Saltwater Fisheries</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect saltwater fisheries.	Addresses management and protection of the state's saltwater fisheries.
Chapter 372 <i>Wildlife</i>	<p>Prior to project initiation a gopher tortoise survey is required. If a gopher tortoise burrow cannot be avoided, a relocation permit through the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) would be required to relocate the tortoise(s).</p> <p>Therefore, the Proposed Action would be consistent with the State's policies concerning the protection of wildlife and other natural resources.</p>	Addresses the management of the wildlife resources of the state.
Chapter 373 <i>Water Resources</i>	<p>Eglin's Water Resources Section, 96<sup>th</sup> CEG/CEVCE, would coordinate all applicable permits in accordance with the Florida Administrative Code (FAC).</p> <p>Applicable permitting requirements for septic and sewer installation would be satisfied in accordance with chapter 373 of the FAC.</p> <p>Applicable permitting requirements would be satisfied in accordance with 62-346 of the FAC and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Eglin AFB would submit a notice of intent to use the generic permit for stormwater discharge under the NPDES program prior to project initiation according to Section 403.0885,</p>	Addresses the state's policy concerning water resources.



	<p>Florida Statutes (FS).</p> <p>Applicable permitting requirements would be satisfied in accordance with the current Consumptive Use Permit for Eglin AFB well usage.</p> <p>Well installation would be consistent with all applicable statutes and regulations under chapter 373 of the FAC.</p> <p>Increases in impervious surface from the Proposed Action would be minor and would not promote a significant increase in stormwater runoff. Best Management Practices (BMPs) (silt fences, hay bales, etc.) would be used to eliminate soil erosion and sedimentation caused by stormwater runoff during and after construction activities.</p>	
<p>Chapter 376 <i>Pollutant Discharge Prevention and Removal</i></p>	<p>Any construction area larger than one acre would require a NPDES General Permit under 40 CFR 122.26(b) (14) (x). A stormwater pollution prevention plan would also be required under the NPDES permit before beginning construction activities.</p> <p>Baseline sampling/testing of the soil would be conducted prior to commencement of construction activities to establish background levels of lead, iron and manganese. Another important BMP for managing lead in these areas is reducing the shotfall zones. To reduce the shotfall area at the range, the range would be designed so that the shot fall areas overlap as much as possible.</p> <p>Immobilization of lead in the proposed range soils would be accomplished by using lime to maintain neutral soil pH. Adjustment of the soil pH to a more neutral level between 6.5 and 8.5 on the pH scale would be achieved to help inhibit lead corrosion. The pH of the soil would be tested annually to establish the appropriate amount of lime application necessary to maintain an acceptable pH level.</p> <p>A lead reclamation program would be implemented to avoid impacts to the soil and groundwater resources. All lead and other material removed for reclamation or disposal would be stored in closed containers and sent to an appropriately permitted facility within the allowed time. Should lead contamination of the</p>	<p>Regulates transfer, storage, and transportation of pollutants, and cleanup of pollutant discharges.</p>

	<p>groundwater or soil occur, the Air Force would take all necessary steps to ensure protection of the unaffected environment and natural resources, as well as remediate any lead contamination caused.</p> <p>The Air Force would document what types of BMPs were implemented to control lead migration, recycling of lead, the date of service, and who completed the services. The records would be kept for the life of the range. Therefore the Proposed Action would not affect the transfer, storage, or transportation of pollutants.</p>	
Chapter 377 <i>Energy Resources</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect energy resource production, including oil and gas, and/or the transportation of oil and gas.	Addresses regulation, planning, and development of oil and gas resources of the state.
Chapter 380 <i>Land and Water Management</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect development of state lands with regional (i.e. more than one county) impacts. The Proposed Action would not include changes to coastal infrastructure such as capacity increases of existing coastal infrastructure, or use of state funds for infrastructure planning, designing or construction.	Establishes land and water management policies to guide and coordinate local decisions relating to growth and development.
Chapter 381 <i>Public Health, General Provisions</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect the state's policy concerning the public health system.	Establishes public policy concerning the state's public health system.
Chapter 388 <i>Mosquito Control</i>	The Proposed Action would not affect mosquito control efforts.	Addresses mosquito control effort in the state.
Chapter 403 <i>Environmental Control</i>	<p>Eglin's Water Resources Section, 96<sup>th</sup> CEG/CEVCE, would coordinate all applicable permits in accordance with the FAC.</p> <p>Air quality impacts from the Proposed Action would be minimal. Eglin AFB would take reasonable precautions to minimize fugitive particulate (dust) emissions during any construction activities in accordance with FAC 62-296.</p> <p>The Proposed Action would not affect water quality, air quality, pollution control, solid waste management, or other environmental control efforts.</p>	Establishes public policy concerning environmental control in the state.
Chapter 582 <i>Soil and Water Conservation</i>	All applicable BMPs, such as erosion and sediment controls and stormwater management measures would be	Provides for the control and prevention of soil erosion.

	<p>implemented to minimize erosion and storm water run-off, and to regulate sediment control.</p> <p>Therefore, the Proposed Action should not affect soil and water conservation efforts.</p>	
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**Figure 1 – Location of Project Area on Eglin AFB**

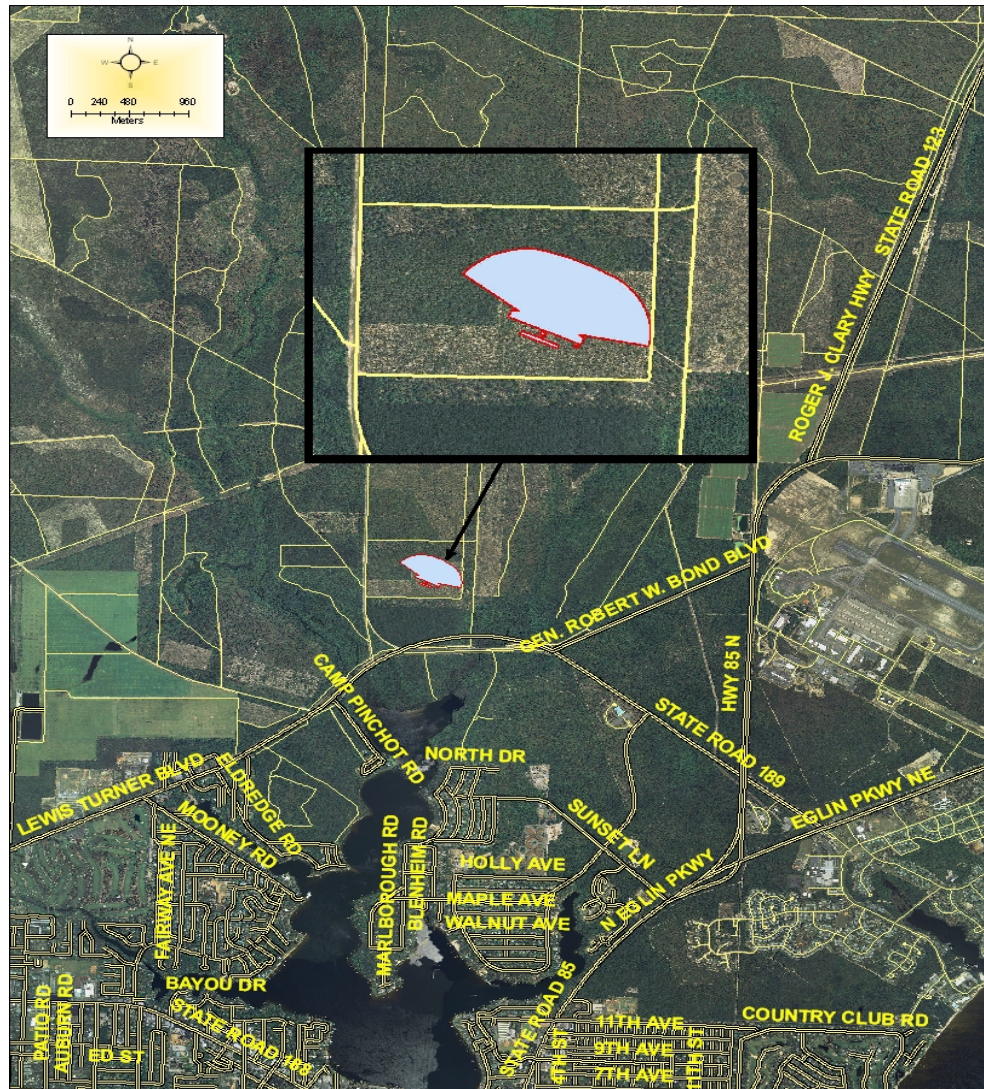
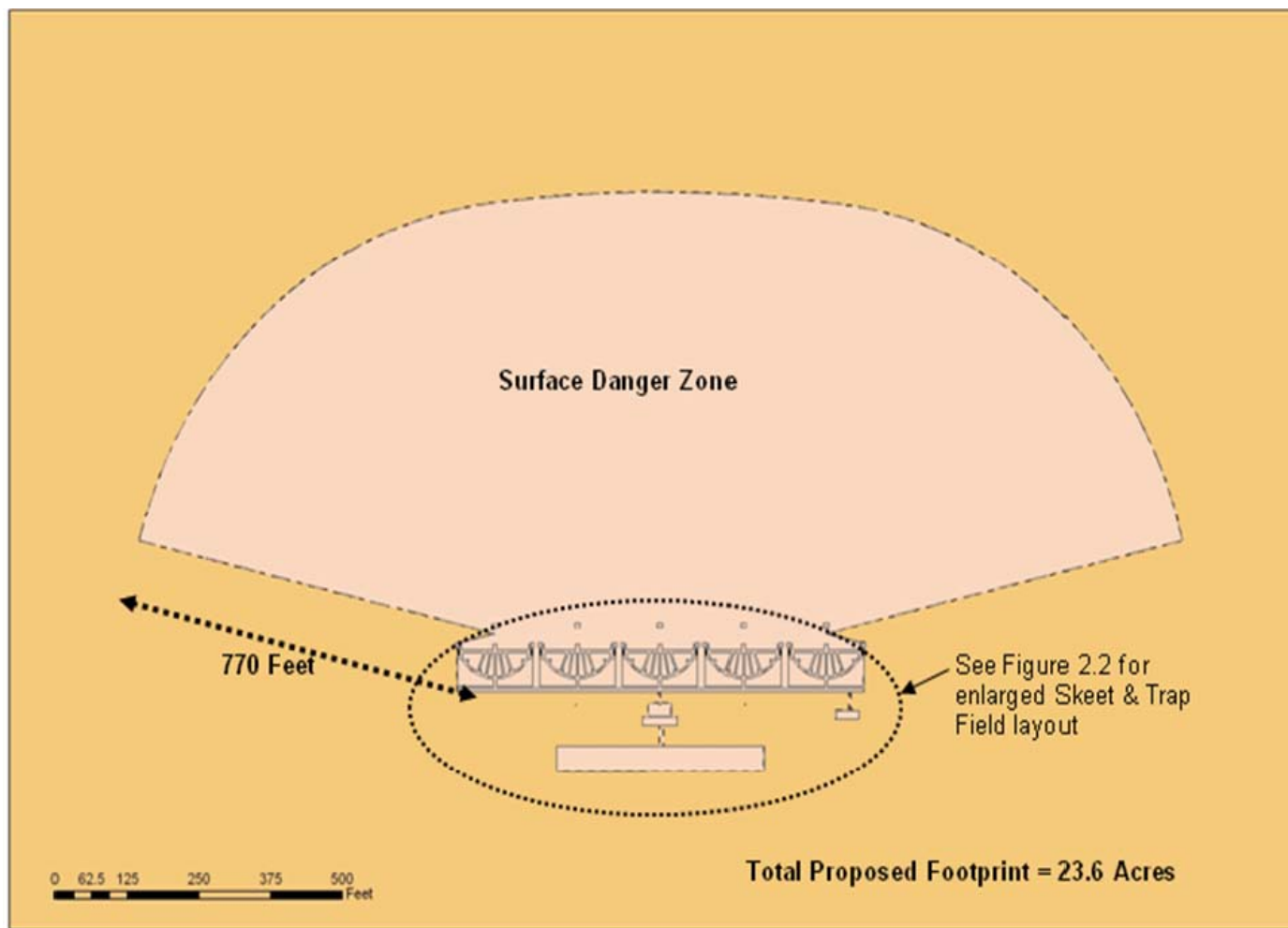


Figure 2 – Proposed Site of Skeet and Trap Range



**Figure 3 – Layout of Skeet and Trap Range**



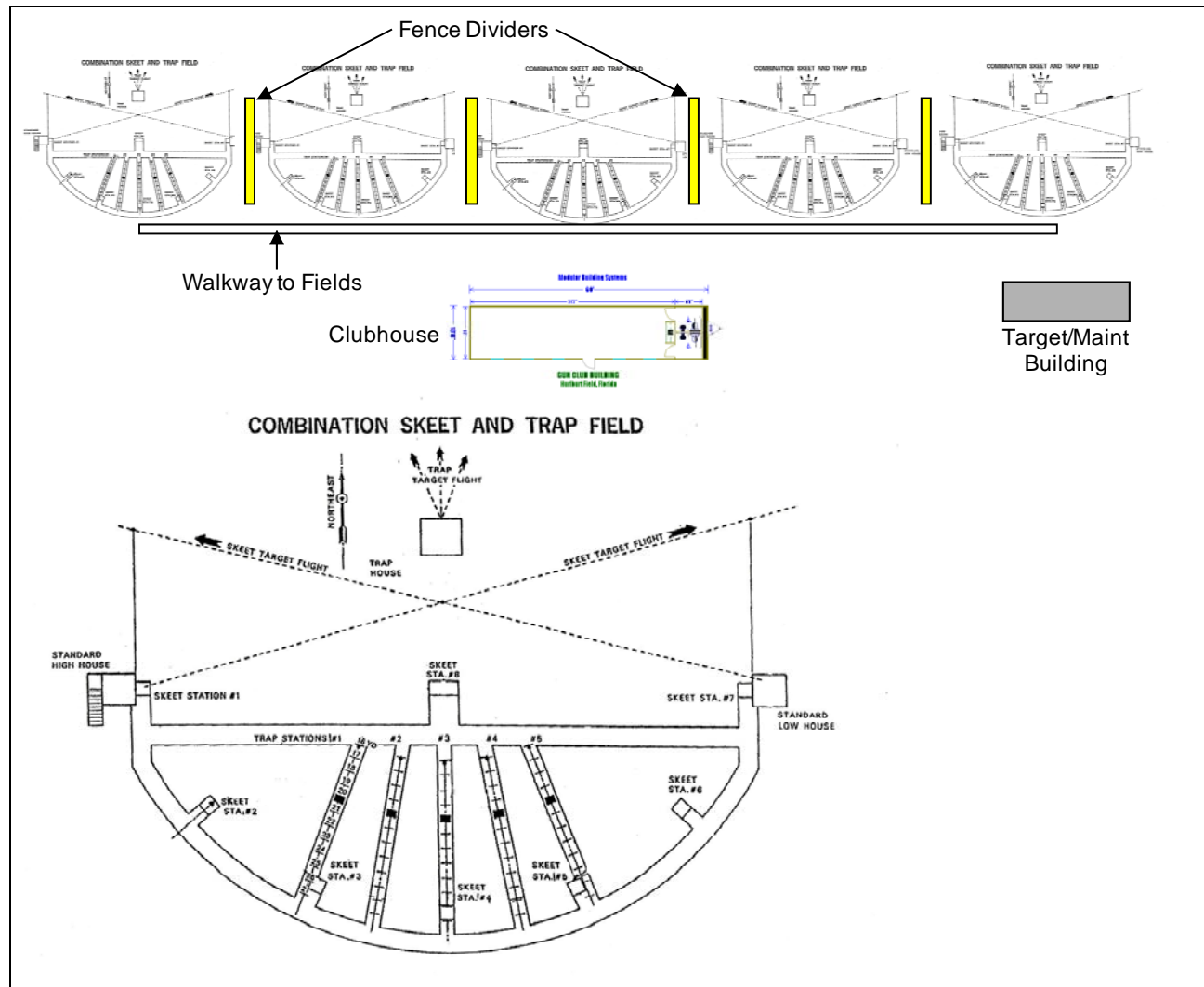


Figure 4 – Skeet and Trap Field Layout

## Avery Chadwick R CIV USAF 96 CEG/CEVSP

---

**From:** Milligan, Lauren [Lauren.Milligan@dep.state.fl.us]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 09, 2008 3:00 PM  
**To:** Knight Kelly E CTR USAF 96 CEG/CEVSNW  
**Cc:** Miller Bob CIV USAF 96 CEG/CEVSNW; Penrose Robert M CTR USAF 96 CEG/CEVSN;  
Avery Chadwick R CIV USAF 96 CEG/CEVSP  
**Subject:** RE: Department of the Air Force - CZMA Negative Determination - Hurlburt Skeet and Trap Range

**Categories:** Orange Category

Ms. Kelly E. Knight  
Environmental Scientist, SAIC  
Eglin AFB - 96 CEG/CEVSN  
107 Highway 85 North  
Niceville, FL 32578

RE: Department of the Air Force - Negative Determination - Construction of Hurlburt Field Skeet and Trap Club Range Facilities, Eglin Air Force Base - Okaloosa County, Florida.  
SAI # FL200806094271

Dear Kelly:

Sorry it took so long to get back with you! The Florida State Clearinghouse is in receipt of your notice regarding the U.S. Air Force's proposal to construct five skeet/trap stations, a building, access drive and parking for 30+ vehicles on Eglin Air Force Base. Department staff does not object 30+ to the Air Force's negative determination and agrees that the proposed action meets the requirements of 15 CFR 930.35.

Please be advised that the proposed project may require an Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) from the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD). For further assistance and information on ERP permitting requirements, please contact Mr. Lee Marchman at the NFWFMD, phone (850) 539-5999.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this proposal. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact me at (850) 245-2170.

Sincerely,

Lauren P. Milligan, Environmental Manager Florida State Clearinghouse Florida Department of Environmental Protection 3900 Commonwealth Blvd, M.S. 47 Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000 ph. (850) 245-2170 fax (850) 245-2190

The Department of Environmental

Protection values your feedback as a customer. DEP Secretary Michael W. Sole is committed to continuously assessing and

improving the level and quality of services provided to you. Please take a few minutes to comment on the quality of

service you received. Copy the url below to a web browser to complete the DEP

survey: <http://survey.dep.state.fl.us/?refemail=Lauren.Milligan@dep.state.fl.us> Thank you in advance for completing the survey.

From: Knight Kelly E CTR USAF 96 CEG/CEVSNW [mailto:Kelly.Knight.ctr@Eglin.af.mil]  
Sent: Tuesday, June 03, 2008 11:41 AM  
To: Milligan, Lauren  
Cc: Miller Bob CIV USAF 96 CEG/CEVSNW; Penrose Robert M CTR USAF 96 CEG/CEVSN; Avery Chadwick R CIV USAF 96 CEG/CEVSP  
Subject: Department of the Air Force - CZMA Negative Determination - Hurlburt Skeet and Trap Range

Ms. Lauren P. Milligan, Environmental Consultant Florida State Clearinghouse, Florida  
Department of Environmental Protection 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail Station 47  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-4700

Department of the Air Force - Negative Determination - Hurlburt Skeet and Trap Range, Eglin  
Air Force Base (AFB), Okaloosa County, Florida

Dear Lauren:

Attached is the US Air Force's proposal to provide the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) with details for the construction of a Skeet and Trap Range on Eglin AFB. The proposed action includes five skeet/trap stations, an access drive and parking for 30+ vehicles. The attached Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) Negative Determination details the proposed action.

We are submitting this CZMA Negative Determination under 15 C.F.R.  
930.35. Please consider a 10-day review period on this project and a response via e-mail.

If you require additional information or have any questions or concerns, I can be reached at (850) 883-5525.

Thank you,

Kelly Knight

Environmental Scientist, SAIC  
Natural Resources Section  
Eglin AFB  
107 Highway 85 N  
Niceville, FL 32578  
Office: 850-883-5525

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## **APPENDIX B – PUBLIC COMMENTS**

# PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Eglin Air Force Base announces the availability of a Draft Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for RCS 07-126, "Hurlburt Field Skeet and Trap Club on Eglin Air Force Base, Florida" for public review and comment.

The Proposed Action of RCS 07-126, "Hurlburt Field Skeet and Trap Club on Eglin Air Force Base, Florida," would be to construct a Skeet and Trap Shooting Club range on Eglin AFB property that would provide a sport-shooting range conforming to the National Skeet Shooting Association and Amateur Trapshooting Association standards. The preferred alternative for the range is located on the southern boundary of Eglin AFB south of Field 4 on Ranger Road (Range Road 236) near Lewis Turner Boulevard in Fort Walton Beach.

Your comments on this Draft EA are requested. Letters and other written or oral comments provided may be published in the Final EA. As required by law, comments will be addressed in the Final EA and made available to the public. Any personal information provided, including private addresses, will be used only to identify your desire to make a statement during the public comment period or to compile a mailing list to fulfill requests for copies of the Final EA or associated documents. However, only the names and respective comments of respondent individuals will be disclosed: personal home addresses and phone numbers will not be published in the Final EA.

Copies of the Draft EA and Draft FONSI may be reviewed at the Fort Walton Beach Public Library, 105 SE Miracle Strip Parkway, Fort Walton

Beach, Fla., and Navarre Public Library, 8484 James M. Harvell Rd. Copies will be available for review from June 16, through June 30, 2008. Comments must be received by July 3, 2008.

For more information or to comment on these proposed actions, contact: Mike Spaits, Environmental Public Affairs, 501 De Leon Street, Suite 01, Eglin AFB, Florida 32542-5133 or email: [spaitsm@eglin.af.mil](mailto:spaitsm@eglin.af.mil). Tel: (850) 882-2878; Fax: (850) 882-3761

NW FL DAILY NEWS, 16 Jun 08, pC8

**Response to Comments for RCS 07-126, “Hurlburt Field Skeet and Trap Club on Eglin Air Force Base, Florida,” Environmental Assessment**

A public notice was published in the *Northwest Florida Daily News* on Jun. 16, 2008 to disclose completion of the Draft EA, selection of the preferred alternative, and request for comments during the 15-day pre-decisional comment period.

The 15-day comment period ended on Jun. 30<sup>th</sup>, with the comments required to this office not later than Jul. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008. No comments were received during this period.

//Signed//

Mike Spaits

Public Information Specialist

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## APPENDIX C – SKEET & TRAP SHOTGUN INTEREST SURVEY DATA

### Trap and Skeet Shotgun Interest Survey Data

Conducted November 2006

Distributed by basewide email to nearly 9,000 Hurlburt LAN users

1,240 total respondents (topic revealed after link was opened, if they opened and closed it, they were not counted)

	Yes	No
1. Do you currently own a shotgun?	455	787
2. Have you ever participated in Shotgun Shooting Sports?	447	793
3. If it were available in the local area would you use a Shotgun Sports Trap/Skeet facility, keeping in mind annual membership fees of \$200 or more may apply?	334	906
4. Would you be interested in shooting registered targets for either Trap or Skeet at a local facility?	330	910
5. How often would you visit this type of facility in a year for either practice, training or registered shoots?	Less than once a month: 179	
	Once a month: 101	
	Twice a Month: 117	
	Three times a month: 48	
	Weekly: 54	
	More than once a week: 7	
	No Answer: 3	
6. Would you introduce Shotgun Shooting Sports to others (family members, children, hunters) if proper gun handling techniques and instruction were available?	388	852
7. How far would you drive to attend a local quality facility to shoot Trap/Skeet?	Up to 10 miles: 149	
	Up to 20 miles: 135	
	Up to 30 miles: 96	
	31 miles or more: 69	
8. Please enter your zip code.	This was included to cross reference where they live to the distance they were willing to travel once the site was determined.	

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